



Immigration, Popular Culture, and the Re-routing of European Muslim Identity

Lara N. Dotson-Renta



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“Gibraltar,” lyrics by Régis Fayette Mikano, music by Arnaud Fayette Mikano, arrangements by Régis Ceccarelli. This work contains a sample from “Sinnerman,” a traditional song adapted by Nina Simone. © AT Musiques/ WB Music Corp.

“12 Septembre,” lyrics by Régis Fayette Mikano, music by Arnaud Fayette Mikano, arrangements by Régis Ceccarelli. © AT Musiques

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Dedico este trabajo a esos seres de luz que han guiado mi camino. Gracias sobre todo a mi mamá por siempre creer en mí, por sus tantos sacrificios, su constante apoyo, y su fuerte creencia en el valor de la educación. Gracias a Mima, mi abuelita y mi primera maestra, en cuyos tiernos brazos aprendí a leer y quien despertó mi curiosidad por el conocimiento.

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Introduction

The Strait of Gibraltar, a ribbon of water only eight miles wide (approximately 13 km) at its narrowest point, separates Spain and Morocco. On a sunny day, Morocco can be clearly observed from the Spanish port town of Tarifa. This geographic proximity has fostered a shared history defined by patterns of transit, occupation, and migration. From the rise and fall of Al-Andalus to the current controversy surrounding the Spanish territories of Melilla and Ceuta, the relationship between Spain and Morocco has been one of continual exchange and ambiguity. Indeed, these two Mediterranean countries have, at different moments in time, occupied each other.¹ The result is a pervasive sense of both familiarity and estrangement between the peoples of both nations, a simultaneous feeling of departure and return when moving between one territory and the other.²

Despite the cultural fusions and geographical proximity that bind Morocco and Spain together, the strained relations between the two nations and their peoples cannot be denied. Spain was long isolated from Europe following its vicious civil war (1936–39), during which the Nationalist offensive against the Republicans was launched from Moroccan shores and employed mercenary Moroccan troops.³ The Spanish Civil War, whose death toll is estimated at five hundred thousand, was followed by Francisco Franco's totalitarian regime (1939–75), which crushed regional languages and identities, mandated adherence to Catholicism, and effectively cut Spain out of the European political and economic landscape for most of the twentieth century. The dictatorship also further complicated the relationship between Morocco and Spain, as Franco exploited the historical ties between the two countries in order to place Spain in a position of power with regards to the Maghreb and the wider Arab world.⁴ Franco staunchly enforced the Spanish Protectorate over northern Morocco (established in 1912)

until Morocco became independent of France in 1956 and held onto the territory known as the Spanish Sahara (Western Sahara) until protests made maintaining the territory untenable just before Franco's death in 1975.⁵ In the Spanish national imaginary, the Franco dictatorship became intertwined with Morocco.

Following the tenuous reinstatement of democracy in Spain in 1981, the rapport between Morocco and Spain has been underwritten by the economic disparity driving contemporary immigration patterns between the two nations. The economy of Spain has flourished in recent decades, and Spain is drawing strong lines of distinction between itself and its "developing" neighbor below the Strait of Gibraltar. Long removed from the European community during the dictatorship of General Franco, Spain now aims to position itself as a significant player within the European Union.⁶

In 1992, Spain sought to solidify its place in Europe by displaying the World Expo in Seville⁷ (whose theme was "New Worlds" in reference to Columbus's voyage in 1492) as well as by successfully hosting the Olympics in the recently redeveloped port city of Barcelona, which had suffered greatly, both economically and politically, during the Franco regime. The timing of this new "unveiling" of Spain as a European and global presence is also of particular note, as the date marked the five hundredth anniversary of the start of Spain's colonial empire. As Hank Driessen points out, the 1992 project of national revival showcased Spain's economic possibilities via a recasting of its imperial and Moorish history:

Not only was "1992" a powerful symbol of European integration, in particular the projected date of the completion of the single European market promoted by Euro-politicians and the mass media, but it also referred to the commemoration of the "discovery" of America, the celebration of the World Exhibition in Seville, the Olympic games in Barcelona, the remembrance of the fall in 1492 of the Muslim kingdom of Granada, and the expulsion of the Jews from Spain. The Christian reconquest of Granada completely altered the political and cultural map of the Mediterranean world . . . [signaling] one of the largest "ethno-religious cleansing" operations *avant-la-lettre* in early-modern Europe. (96)

No longer bound by the constraints of dictatorship, Spain sought to distance itself from its reputation for underdevelopment and isolation by reinforcing the narrative of a Christian (hence European) past and proposing Barcelona, a city whose distinct culture and language were brutally repressed by Franco, as an international cultural capital. Barcelona became the showpiece for Spain's newfound modernity and prosperity. Since 1992, Spain's socioeconomic project has been one of "Europeanization." That objective discourages the intertwining of the Spanish nation with Morocco, an Islamic African state. Indeed, Spain's meteoric rise in standard of living from the 1990s onward lies in stark contrast to that of Morocco, a nation struggling with its literacy rates and economy. As a result, the border between Spain and Morocco is now the place at which Spain asserts its "modernity"; it is here that the Spanish nation distinguishes between "ours" and "theirs" when pertaining to wealth and development.

With this widening financial disparity comes unease.⁸ As Spanish journalist Ignacio Cembrero points out, the border between Spain and Morocco has become a site that bears witness to the places in which the two nations do *not* meet:

La frontera entre España y Marruecos es la primera del mundo por la diferencia de desarrollo humano, según el índice que establece las Naciones Unidas (puesto 21 para España y 124 para Marruecos); la séptima del mundo por la desigualdad de renta por habitante (de 1 a 15), y la duodécima por la disparidad de poder adquisitivo de sus ciudadanos (1 a 5.45). Es la frontera más desigual no sólo de la Unión Europea, sino también de los países miembros de la organización para la Cooperación y el Desarrollo Económico (OCDE), que reagrupa las principales potencias industriales. Lo peor no es el abismal desnivel entre ambas orillas del Estrecho. Lo peor es que cada año se ahonda más la diferencia. (267)⁹

[The frontier between Spain and Morocco is first in the world for the difference in human development, according to the index established by the United Nations (number 21 for Spain and 124 for Morocco); seventh in the world for income disparity per inhabitant (1 to 15), and twelfth for the disparity in the power of acquisition among its citizens (1 to 5.45). It is the most unequal border not only of the United

Nations, but also of the member countries of Cooperation and Economic Development (OCDE), which encompasses the principal industrial powers. The worst part is not the abysmal inequality between the two shores of the Strait. The worst part is that each year the difference becomes more profound.]¹⁰

The border, then, represents not only a point of psychic transition but also the difference between the “first” and “third” worlds. The Spanish border as described by Cembrero serves not only as a dividing line between nations but also as a safeguard against the mixing of Africa and Europe, of Islam and Christianity. It protects the “civilized” West from clashing differences in “human development.” The economic differences are also increasingly exacerbated by religious and political ideology, as the September 11, 2001, terrorist events in New York and the Madrid bombings of March 11, 2004, highlighted the rise of assertive Islam. In the eyes of many European countries, Morocco was suddenly not only poor; it was also (dangerously) Muslim.

Whereas earlier in the shared history of Spain and Morocco, Islam was a common if conflictive bond, the onslaught of global terrorism and its political aftermath have created a growing estrangement between the two countries. As Carmen González Enríquez notes,

This climate of voluntary silence about the Muslim presence in Spain was broken after the terrorist attack of 11 March 2004 (192 persons were killed in the trains in Madrid) perpetrated by Moroccan immigrants, which provoked an increase in Islamophobic feelings in the Peninsula and opened the door to the publication on the mass media of reports about the political and cultural life of Moroccans living in Spain. The first report published in a nationwide newspaper on the relations between both groups in Ceuta and Melilla appeared in 2005, in an article in *El País*—the leading daily newspaper in Spain—entitled “The Pressure of our Islam” with the subtitle, “Secret services affirm that the Muslim population will form the majority in Ceuta and Melilla in the next decade: a non-integrated population, seen as a threat to (Spanish) sovereignty” . . . the latent conflict between both groups has exploded into outbursts of protest, such as that in the year 2000 which involved the violent opposition of Christian parents in Ceuta to the schooling of 30 Moroccan teenagers who had migrated to the town in the centre given to their children. (223, 224)

As González makes clear, the historical and cultural symbiosis between Morocco and Spain existent from the time of Al-Andalus is being challenged by factors of economic need and the globalization of terrorism.¹¹

Yet, in spite of these conflictive sentiments, the border between the two countries is becoming increasingly porous, embodying the phenomenon of what I will describe as the *traslado*, or the translation/transfer of cultural memory and national identity. I have chosen to employ the word *traslado* as a working term to describe the migratory and memory relationships between Morocco and Spain because it encompasses or otherwise implies the range of subversive and inclusive operations that migrants undertake when moving between spaces. In Spanish, the word *traslado* means

trasladar.

(De *traslado*).

1. tr. Llevar a alguien o algo de un lugar a otro. U. t. c. prnl.
2. tr. Hacer pasar a alguien de un puesto o cargo a otro de la misma categoría.
3. tr. Hacer que un acto se celebre en día o tiempo diferente del previsto.
4. tr. Pasar algo o traducirlo de una lengua a otra.
5. tr. Copiar o reproducir un escrito.¹²

- [1. To take something or someone from one place to another.
2. To pass someone from one post or charge to another within the same category.
3. To celebrate an act or a day at a different time than originally foreseen.
4. To move something or translate it from one language to another.
5. To copy or reproduce a text or writing.]

This means that *traslado* encompasses both language and space and is able to address not only the movement and relocation of persons but also the continuous processes of linguistic and cultural transition, reformulation, translation, and dislocation that accompany migration. The implication of the second dictionary meaning of *traslado*, that it is a type of lateral move, also reinforces the sense of familiarity, shared past, and (un)comfortable sameness that categorizes transit between Spain and Morocco. Moreover, the term *traslado* is colloquially used in Spain to refer to the deportation of illegal immigrants. If, as Michel de Certeau

posits, “Every story is a travel story—a spatial practice” (115), then *traslado* as a narrative trope designates the relationship migrants maintain between Morocco and Spain as one of circularity and exchange, of constant remembering and forgetting, leaving and returning, while highlighting the looming threat of expulsion. I will utilize the colloquial term *traslado* in a broader analytical sense to describe the emotional, cultural, and bureaucratic transference operations that a migrant must undertake in order to function in between places and cultures as well as the modes by which the *traslado* may be (de)stabilizing for both migrant and “native.”

What distinguishes the experience of *traslado* at the Moroccan-Spanish border from other borders where transit is common is an entrenched sense of repetition and familiarity on either side. Within the context of an expanding Europe, this sense of cultural déjà vu causes particular apprehension in Spain with regard to the renewed presence of Islam on Spanish soil, as the rise of assertive Islam has increased animosity and mistrust between the two nations.¹³ Unlike other nations, such as the United States and Mexico, Spain and Morocco began their occupations of each other before the era of European imperialism. They thus fit uneasily within the usual “postcolonial” paradigm used to analyze migrations to a *métropole*.¹⁴ Unlike the case of the United States, Spain is also attempting to fit itself into a greater political body (the EU) while inhabiting a kind of historical dual time/reenactment of history that is being continually played out via current migratory practices. As Driessen again points out,

The Mediterranean is not only a political, demographic, and economic divide, but also an ideological and moral frontier, increasingly perceived by Europeans as a barrier between democracy and secularism on the one hand, totalitarianism and religious fanaticism on the other . . . when Spain joined the European Union its southern border became a European frontier. The reinforcement and re-marking of this frontier have not only affected the political and economic relationships in the wider region but also the cultural categories used to divide people into “us” and “them.” The Inner Sea has increasingly become the spatial, political, and cultural boundary between Europe and the “Third World” . . . At the same time, the members of the European Union find themselves faced with growing ethnic minorities of diverse origin within their territories.

New internal boundaries are being created between the majority and minority populations in southern Europe. (101)

As the Inner Sea has become the dividing line between the first and third world, Spain becomes the site where Europe begins to “divide people into ‘us’ versus ‘them.’” The *traslado* becomes a means by which to delineate one’s place within this paradigm. Certainly, this fluid *traslado* dynamic has taken on new complexities as modern societies cope with the effects of mass communication, burgeoning migration, blurred borders, and increasing polarization along religious lines. Mistrust stemming from global terrorist events, combined with the critical issue of immigration, has led to a renegotiation of the rapport between the two Mediterranean nations. The predominantly Muslim, Arabic-speaking Morocco and the now highly secular, “European” Spain must now encounter a new transformation of their relationship, one fraught with political difficulties yet bound together by centuries of cultural cross-pollination. This is compounded by the fact that Morocco is a crossing point not only for Moroccans but also for the whole of Africa. This uneasy intimacy was one that Franco-Bulgarian philosopher Julia Kristéva pinpointed: “Vivre avec l’autre, avec l’étranger, nous confronte à la possibilité ou non *d’être un autre*. Il ne s’agit pas simplement—humanistement—de notre aptitude à accepter l’autre; mais *d’être à sa place*, ce qui revient à se penser et à se faire autre à soi-même” (25; Living with the other, with the stranger, confronts us with the possibility of *being or not being another/an “other.”* It is not simply or humanistically about our capacity to accept the other, but of *being in their place*, which comes back to thinking and making an/other of one’s self). The anxiety faced by Spain is not limited to living with an/other, but of all too easily being able to recognize one’s self in the place of a familiar, “Arabized” *autre*.

Certainly, the mounting trepidation with which East and West view each other has had far-reaching implications on the links forged *entre dos orillas*, or “between two shores.” While Europe lives at the edge of the Mediterranean, Spain sits atop Africa, fully aware that the phrase “Africa starts at the Pyrenees” (Africa comienza en los Pirineos) has remained popular in Spain as well as France for centuries.

This Spanish anxiety with regard to the “other” is deeply rooted and is tied to Spain’s long-standing ambivalent relationship with the rest of Europe. Just as Spain has always sought a way into the European Union even before it was conceived as such, Europe was not always welcoming to a Spain that had been unsuccessful at “casting out” its ethnic undesirables. In fact, Spain has been depicted as constituting an undesirable entity for Europe at large. As French diplomat, historian, and archbishop of Mechelen (Belgium) Dominique Georges Frédéric Pradt stated in his chronicle *Mémoires historiques sur la révolution d’Espagne* (*Historical Memories of the Revolution of Spain*), written in 1816:

C’est une erreur de la géographie que d’avoir attribué l’Espagne à l’Europe; elle appartient à l’Afrique: sang, moeurs, langage, manière de vivre et de combattre; en Espagne tout est africain. Les deux nations ont été mêlées trop longtems [sic], les Carthaginois venus d’ Afrique en Espagne, les Vandales passés d’ Espagne en Afrique, les Maures séjournant en Espagne pendant 700 ans, pour qu’une aussi longue cohabitation, pour que ces transfusions de peuples et de coutumes n’aient pas confondu ensemble les races et les moeurs des deux contrées. Si l’Espagnol était Mahométan, il serait un Africain complet; c’est la religion qui l’a conservé à l’Europe. (168)

[It is an error of geography to have attributed Spain to Europe; she belongs to Africa: blood, mores, language, mode of living and fighting; in Spain everything is African. Both nations have been mixed together for a very long time; the Carthaginians having come from Africa to Spain, the Vandals passed from Spain to Africa, the Moors stayed in Spain for 700 years, how could such a long cohabitation, such a transfusion of peoples and customs, not have confused together the races and mores of two regions. If the Spaniard were Muslim, he would be completely African; it’s religion that has held (Spain) to Europe.]

This passage illustrates the image that Spain has long held vis-à-vis “old” Europe and how Africa has long shaped and fractured a “whole” or “pristine” view of Spanish identity. Spain is represented not only as a country of passage, through which a number of outsider, savage, or otherwise “non-European” groups have passed and indelibly left their mark, but also as a place that has been irrevocably racially

tainted by the “transfusions” these crossings entail. As Spain is unable to be “cleansed,” it becomes an “error of geography.” Thus the intrinsic character of the Spanish people is described as “African,” including their blood, mores, and way of life. If, as Pradt claims, the only thing definitively tying Spain to Europe is its (Catholic) religion, then this too poses a crisis for Spain, as Islam is deeply entrenched in its history and is always at its doorstep. As Spain has become more “European” due to its participation in the EU and its more developed economy, its numbers of Muslim immigrants have increased dramatically. This places Spain in a unique double bind: the new wave of Moroccan arrivals often invokes the memory of Al-Andalus, highlighting a sense of circular return as well as the latent presence of a perceived interior “other,” just as Spain attempts to distance itself from its “Africanized” heritage. Paradoxically, I contend that it is the very influx of Moroccan (Arab and Muslim) immigrants that *sustains* Spain’s link to the rest of modern Europe. As a destination for Arab immigrants, Spain now finds itself in a sociopolitical situation similar to that of other European countries, most notably and ironically that of neighboring France.

In selecting texts and cultural productions for analysis, I chose works that were produced relatively recently (primarily between 2000 and 2006) because contemporary works are most clearly representative of the factors directly impacting the current Hispano-Moroccan relationship: the post-Franco economic revitalization of Spain and Spain’s subsequent 1986 entry into the European union and the terrorist events of September 11, 2001, in New York and March 11, 2004, in Madrid. The end of the Franco dictatorship not only signaled the reopening of Spain to the world and its acceptance (at least in political and economic terms) onto the European playing field, but it also indicated the resetting of the circular pattern of transit and exchange between Morocco and Spain that had been paused by Spain’s isolation and economic stagnancy under Franco. Thereby, cultural works produced in the late 1990s and early 2000s, when the immigrant population was fully established, are of particular interest. I further narrowed the corpus to works immediately before or just following 9/11, since the specter of terrorism and Islam as not only

undesirable but also ostensibly dangerous and destructive thereby added another dimension of urgency and complexity to the *traslado* experience.

Indeed, terrorism has haunted the Hispano-Moroccan relationship, as well as European perceptions of “the Muslim” at large, for the last decade. Not only has the Arab, African, Middle Eastern, or South Asian immigrant (irrespective of religious views) come to be defined as a Muslim first and foremost; this “condition” of Muslim has, in many European political and social circles, come to equate a position of the “unknowable,” and thus intrinsically inassimilable. This has changed the means and modes of how crossings are now studied. As Bryant K. Alexander notes,

In a post-9/11 era, Cultural Studies must reflect on literal and metaphorical bleeding borders, on the inflicted violence of intentional travel and the residue that we carry into occupied and unoccupied territories (whether under the guise of tourism, humanitarianism, or war), on why we cross borders and the intentions of our actions, on the expectations between the known and the unknown, on the bombs of destruction to physical and ideological structures—and how what comes after (post) is always a residual effect of preceding conditions made manifest in the social relations of embodied presences. In other words, addressing the dialectics of terrorism in response to 9/11, Peter McLaren . . . writes: “We cannot divorce the recent acts of terrorism from their historical context.” Each stands as evidence in the face of experience.¹⁵ (168)

The (Muslim) immigrant in the post-9/11 era is now viewed as the potential harbinger of violence. What was once an already difficult postcolonial immigrant dynamic based on disparate economic systems and colonial histories has now become imbricated with very real, contemporary suspicions of incoming or long-standing immigrants as “the other within,” “an embodied presence” that threatens national unity and peace from the inside out. This apprehension is particularly salient in Spain, whose history cannot be separated from Islam. This new European (and global) preoccupation with terrorism calls for an employment of postcolonial theory that crosses geographical, disciplinary, and area boundaries, invoking the global aspect of the

movements and dialogues being proposed while not neglecting the specificity of the Muslim experience in what is taking place.

In the following chapters, I investigate the remapping of Europe as a topography of immigration as well as explore the ways in which cultural production, including literature, hip-hop, film, and the visual arts, is translating and transforming an old Mediterranean identity into a new one that is fraught with the legacies of “post-colonial” economies and media. I am particularly interested in how the Moorish history of Al-Andalus is being revisited by immigrants as a means by which to claim “insider” status in Spain and elsewhere in Europe as well as a way to proclaim Islam as a European religion. I will assess how the transitory Maghrebi subject is reimagining self, home, and nation across European borders while paradoxically making Spain more European by integrating it into the landscape of European immigration. In this framework, it is useful to utilize and invert Walter Mignolo’s description of the Maghreb in *Local Histories/Global Designs*. In this study, Mignolo declares,

I want to indicate a geohistorical location that is constructed *as a crossing instead of as a grounding* (e.g., the nation). Located between Orient, Occident, and Africa, the Maghreb is the crossing of the global in itself. On the other hand, in order to think of the Maghreb as the difference that cannot be told, and not as an “area” to be studied, we need a kind of thinking beyond the social sciences and positivistic philosophy, a kind of thinking that moves along the diversity of the historical process itself. Such a way of thinking should first be attentive, “listening to Maghreb in its plurality (linguistic, cultural, and political)”; and, second, it should be attentive to “Maghreb exteriority.” This is an exteriority that shall be decentered from its dominant determinations in such a way that would make it possible to think beyond the ontologization of an area to be studied and move to a reflection of the historicity of differences. (69)

Indeed, the Maghreb can be considered a crossing of the global. With its many possible routings as a site of arrival, departure, and passage toward Europe, Africa, and the Middle East, it has in fact long been seen as a “crossing instead of as a grounding.” What I posit through my analysis of Maghrebi-based immigrant texts is that we are witnessing

a process by which the Maghreb is grounding and reinventing itself in Spain (as well as in Europe at large), thereby making Europe the “crossing of the global” despite itself. The seductive, boundaryless view cast upon Africa for so long appears to be inverting itself, as it is now a porous Europe that struggles to define itself and close itself off from Africa’s remapping of it. It is a dynamic, unpredictable process that is both constitutive of new identities and destructive of old ones.

The instability and fertility of this discursive metamorphosis is reflected in the different fields that have been drawn upon for discussion and examination in this study, such as Latino and Chicano studies, border studies, postcolonial theory, Francophone and African diaspora studies, and the Peninsular “master narratives” centered upon the before/after date of 1492. That all these seemingly disparate fields can be fruitfully woven together and coherently interconnected in a study of the Maghreb in Spain is a testament to the globalization of the postcolonial immigrant experience as well as to the transnational aspects of modern Islam.

The first chapter, titled “Memory, Return, and the ‘Other Side,’” centers upon the themes of memory and return, on the manifestations and backdrop of the encounter between Morocco and Spain in light of current migratory patterns. The primary texts I have chosen to approach these intersections are *Jo també soc catalana* (*I Too Am Catalan*) by Catalan-Moroccan writer Najat El Hachmi (2008), *Partir* (*Leaving*) by Franco-Moroccan novelist Tahar Ben Jelloun (2006), and the anthology *Cuentos de las dos orillas* (*Tales of Two Shores*, 2006), a Spanish- and Arabic-language anthology of Moroccan and Spanish authors. These works, written in Spanish, French, Catalan, and Arabic, point to the Hispano-Moroccan relationship as an increasingly European dynamic linking Spain to other nations. As Susan Martín-Márquez notes,

In this postcolonial, democratic era, even as the African inheritance has been mobilized anew, Spain has again sought to affirm its place within Europe, this time by fortifying—both literally and figuratively—its borders with Africa. Yet African immigrants’ incursions into the Spanish cultural sphere effectively bury the ghosts of the medieval past, so strategically employed by Spaniards over the previous two centuries; their

narratives eschew exaltation of an idealized and remote *convivencia*¹⁶ to focus on more recent historical memories of expulsion and enslavement, colonization and deportation, even as they struggle to envision and to theorize a new place for themselves in the world. (354)

The texts analyzed speak to how migratory intersections and (re) encounters in a sense *inhabit* those who leave, those who stay, and those with European national identities. These novels force a “struggle to envision and to theorize” that necessarily involves the re-routing and re-rooting of European history and narrative through the immigrant Muslim experience of displacement. The result is a dynamic body of work that creates a recognizable artistic aesthetic *of and about immigration* as well as a style of narration that rejects affiliation to any single national canon while utilizing multiple languages in ways that may be seen as both constructive and disruptive.

The second chapter, titled “Romancing Europe: Postcolonial Foundational Fictions,” takes a more focused approach toward the personal relationships and intercultural meetings that shape this renewed Hispano-Moroccan interaction. These complexities are evident in my readings of Manuel Valls’s *¿Dónde estás Ahmed? (Where Are You, Ahmed?)*, a Spanish-language young adult novel about a frustrated romance between a Catalan girl and her Moroccan boyfriend (2000); of Franco-Moroccan author Tahar Ben Jelloun’s novel *Partir (Leaving)*, about a Moroccan obsessed with migrating to Spain (2006); and of Belgian-Moroccan director Yasmine Kassari’s film *L’enfant endormi (The Sleeping Child)*, which details the effects of immigration on those left behind in the country of origin (2004). All speak to the ways in which sex and intimacy negotiate the sovereignty of the nation itself.

Intimacy is increasingly at the forefront of “border issues,” as European national identities are challenged and their economies become (perhaps troublingly) intertwined in light of current economic crises. Individual countries seek to preserve their distinct national characters while also promoting themselves as part of a common community. In political discourse as well as popular perception, there is a growing awareness that borders are national but also *European*. As a result, foreigners arriving in ever-higher numbers are doubly alienated from what is often called “Fortress Europe.” The problematization

of citizenship and its increasing inaccessibility to non-native-born Europeans is noted by Etienne Balibar in *We, the People of Europe: Reflections on Transnational Citizenship* (2004): “European citizenship, within the limits of the currently existing union, is not conceived of as a recognition of the rights and contributions of *all* the communities present upon European soil, but as a postcolonial isolation of ‘native’ and ‘nonnative’ populations . . . In *each particular country* the foreigner is only the national of another sovereign state, enjoying an equivalent ‘belonging’, which is the object of reciprocal recognition. But *at the level of the newly instituted union* [emphasis Balibar’s], he or she becomes the object of an internal exclusion” (170–71). The term “internal exclusion” may also be applied with regard to intimate partnerships and intimate belongings. Experiences of rejection and expulsion are played out not only on a national or political stage but also in terms of interpersonal alliances. Who is desired by whom, and for what purpose, reflects what individuals belong to/in the nation.

As Elspeth Probyn pointed out in *Outside Belongings* (1996), the term “belonging” implies parameters of affect, whereby *being* may also be seen as a *longing*. In this respect, wanting to belong in a country can take on a sexual dimension. For newly arriving immigrants, sex and marriage are often seen not as a means by which to consolidate a sense of national belonging, but as tactical and economic tools by which to alternately bypass or trespass the politics of exclusion. The vigilance and the idealization of the marital or sexual relationship as a marker of national belonging is being challenged by the sexual realities and compromises that illegal immigration presents in the twenty-first century, of which sex trafficking, the threat of rape at border crossings, and being put into prostitution are but a few. In the context of postimperial immigration to Europe, sex and marriage present as much of a challenge to the borders of the state as they do the possibility of security. Romantic relationships in particular are depicted as the pulse of the new emerging Spain (or Europe, in fact), as they exemplify the push-pull, fracture, and attraction between the European “insider” and the “other,” particularly in the area of Cataluña. Each primary text at some point touches upon a tumultuous romantic relationship between a Moroccan and a Spaniard that either pulls families or

communities together or unravels them entirely. Here I hope to transform Doris Sommer's *Foundational Fictions* (1991), which posits that the state deploys and promotes its national and racial projects through the idealization of romantic relationships that form the "foundation" for national origins and identity. Sommer's argument completely elides homosexual relationships as well as kinship attachments that may replace traditional marital arrangements. I argue that romantic involvements are now creating postnational identities, thereby shifting away from the paradigm of intimacy and nationalism of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

The third chapter, titled "*Europe via Spain: Media, Islam, and the Sounds of Immigrant Identity*," develops film and music as a locus of a "new Europeanness" that reshapes nationhood and identity through the prism of immigration. Through the analysis of the Catalan film *Raval, Raval* (2007) and the work of Franco-Congolese rapper Abd Al-Malik, La Caution, DAM, and others, I delve into how music, film, and other media interplay with written texts to create a new discursive space that is bound by the immigrant experience rather than by national affiliation. As identities become forged *between* national spaces, artistic communities become bound together by the experience of cultural transit rather than citizenship. As Arjun Appadurai notes, electronic media has proven a particularly powerful tool in challenging the state's capacity to bestow or take away cultural identity:

Electronic media gives a new twist to the environment within which the modern and the global often appear as flip side of the same coin. Always carrying the sense of distance between viewer and event, these media nevertheless compel the transcript of everyday discourse . . . As with mediation, so with motion. The story of mass migrations (voluntary or forced) is hardly a new feature in human history. But when it is juxtaposed with the rapid-flow of mass-mediated media images, scripts, and sensations, we have a new order of instability in the production of modern subjectivities . . . we see moving images meet deterritorialized viewers. These create diasporic public spheres, phenomena that confound theories that depend on the continued salience of the nation-state as the key arbiter of important social changes. (3–4)

Immigrants have seized upon this “new order of instability in the production of modern subjectivities,” utilizing media as a means by which to insert themselves into the cultural and national discourse. The experiences of globalization are being proclaimed (and sung, acted, or written) not from the top-down order of the economic system but from the bottom-up viewpoint of those whose bodies circulate as commodities. I am particularly interested in artistic manifestations of Islamic transnationalism and in investigating how “Moorishness” is being more widely reappropriated as a marker of insider identity and kinship. In this vein, I hope to demonstrate the ways in which Barcelona, as a point of linguistic, political, and cultural juncture within Spain (as well as a connecting point to France), uniquely embodies the newest articulations of the overarching *traslado* motif and what this development is doing to redefine Cataluña and the Mediterranean as “alternate” territories (or border zones) within Europe itself. I posit that rather than being an exceptional site of cultural enunciation, Barcelona is actually indicative of the future of Europe as a whole.

In Arabic, *Maghreb* means “place of sunset” or “the West” (from an Arab perspective). Seen in this context, the process of *traslado* and the transnationalization of Moorishness may indeed be redefining the meaning of “the West” as it has long been characterized by “classically” European nations. As immigration continues to narrow the Strait of Gibraltar’s tenuous division of Morocco and Mediterranean Europe, the strait and its history actually begins to function as a conduit by which Africa becomes more European and Europe becomes more African. As the geographical and historical bridge for this flow, Spain has become (despite itself) the axis by which Europe is testing its boundaries and the limits of its national and ethnic identities. As the sun continues to set on the age of pristine nationalities and fixed national imaginaries, it may be the Maghreb and its history of crossings that set the tone for what “the West” is and will become.

CHAPTER 1

Memory, Return, and the “Other Side”

Introduction

Emerging from the social and political maelstrom caused by booming North African Muslim immigration to Spain (and to Europe at large) in the post-9/11 era is a varied and dynamic body of cultural works centered upon the migrant experience. Novels, film, music, and other media have given a multilingual voice to immigrant communities, while enjoying vast circulation and increasing recognition. In this chapter, I analyze three notable examples of texts in which the Hispano-Moroccan migrant experience is addressed: *Cuentos de las dos orillas*, a Spanish-Arabic collection of short stories (2006), *Jo també sóc catalana*, a semiautobiographical novel by Moroccan-Catalan author Najat El Hachmi (2004), and *Partir*, a book by Franco-Moroccan author Tahar Ben Jelloun that, while written in French by a Paris-based author, chooses to focus on immigration to Spain rather than France (2006). Indeed, these texts speak not only of the internationalization of the immigrant narrative but also of how migratory intersections and (re)encounters in a sense *inhabit* those who leave, those who stay, and those with European national identities. As Sarah Ahmed proposes,

The lived experience of being-at-home hence involves the enveloping of subjects in a space which is not simply outside them: being-at-home suggests that the subject and space leak into each other, *inhabit each other*. We can think of the lived experience of being-at-home in terms

of inhabiting a second skin, a skin which does not simply contain the homely subject, but which allows the subject to be touched and touch the world that is neither simply in the home or away from the home. The home as skin suggests the boundary between self and home is permeable, but also that the boundary between home and away is permeable as well. (*Strange Encounters: Embodied Others in Post-Coloniality*, 89)

The aforementioned novels insist upon the permeability of borders and cultures, as well as the self and the body as migrating sites of “home.” The result is a corpus that creates a recognizable artistic aesthetic *of and about immigration* as well as a mode of narration that eschews affiliation to any single national canon while utilizing multiple languages in ways that may be seen as both integrative and disruptive.

Certainly, the tales told in *Cuentos de la dos orillas*, *Jo també sóc catalana*, and *Partir* describe not only the points of encounter between Spain and Morocco but also the locations of slippage and fracture that indelibly mark the relationship between the two nations. The stories depict the blurring of what once may have been perceived as “sovereign” spaces, be they cultural, political, or spiritual, so that the transitory subject is left with a sense of being everywhere and nowhere at once. The Strait of Gibraltar itself is symbolic of this shift: this narrow, fluid, and treacherous space tenuously connects two perceptions of national identity. The subject caught in between is neither here nor there but rather *entre dos orillas*. In light of mass migrations, globalized media, and booming linguistic exchange on a global scale, the place of transition becomes ever narrower. This inevitably forces further reinterpretations of the meaning of collective identity itself. In the case of Morocco and Spain, attempts at defining a national or cultural collectivity on either side are further problematized by the insolubility of isolating what is “indigenous” to each place. After hundreds of years of shared history, disentangling any notions of “yours” and “ours” becomes impossible.

***Cuentos de las dos orillas:* Writing between Morocco and Spain**

In this volatile political and economic climate, it is via a sense of shared culture that Moroccans and Spaniards are undertaking a rearticulation of the Hispano-Moroccan discourse. As evidenced by a rich corpus of music, literature, and architecture, the legacy of cultural exchange is the vehicle by which the two countries have managed to address their evolving relationship.¹ Along with the troubled sociopolitical situation has come a renewed Spanish interest in Arabic works, as well as a desire to understand the new "Spanish Islam" practiced on the Iberian Peninsula.² The massive migratory movements from North Africa to such vibrant cities as Barcelona, whose political autonomy and cultural separatism places it in a marginal position within the Spanish national imaginary, have fueled a curiosity about intellectual and artistic work that speaks from a place of transition. Certainly, the encounter of languages (Spanish and Arabic) recalls an origin and sense of place just as boundaries are being crossed. In recognition of language as a site of possibility and understanding, the cultural ministries of Morocco and Spain, as well as a number of their respective chambers of commerce, have supported a series of translation projects and arts exchanges for performance or distribution in the major urban centers of both countries.

One notable example of this is a project called El Programa Al-Mutamid de Cooperación Hispano-Marroquí (The Al-Mutamid Program for Hispano-Moroccan Cooperation). Created in 1999, it is a joint venture of the *Instituto Internacional del Teatro del Mediterráneo* (IITM; International Institute of Theater of the Mediterranean) in Madrid and *L'Institut Supérieur d'Art Dramatique et d'Animation Culturelle* (The Superior International Institute for Mediterranean Theater, also known as ISADAC) based in Rabat. Named after Al-Mutamid (1040–95), one of the greatest poets of Al-Andalus, the program

seeks to foster an exchange of ideas and an open dialogue via writing, music, and performance. Their first project, titled *Cuentos de las dos orillas*, is a collection of short stories that express the contemporary relationship between Spain and Morocco. The stories were meant to be performed orally, so as to honor the Hispano-Moroccan narrative tradition. Eight authors were chosen to contribute texts. The IITM asked three Spanish authors, Rosa Regás, Magdalena Lasala, and Antonio Álamo, as well as the theater collective *El Astillero*. For the Moroccan portion, the ISADAC chose Miloudi Chaghmoum, Mustafa Al-Misnawi, Rachid Nini, and Muhammad Azzedine Tazi. Titled *Reencuentros: Memoria Andalusí* (*Reencounters: Andalusian Memory*) when performed, the works are also distributed in printed form as the Arabic/Spanish bilingual edition *Cuentos de las dos orillas*. Interestingly, the compilation leaves out the colonial French language while privileging Arabic over Berber languages and giving equal weight to Spanish. The compilation signals a new direction in the relationship between Spain and Morocco, one that attempts to draw on artistic legacies of the past to better understand the intricacies of the present.

Through the usage of bilingualism and translation, the arts seek to foster a platform upon which Spain and Morocco stand as partners in cultural production despite economic and sociopolitical differences. The new vigor with which creative mediums, and language in particular, are approached by artists on either side of the Strait of Gibraltar reflects a desire to explore the transitive, often challenging nature of movement across borders. As Judith Butler asserts, “Language has a dual possibility: It can be used to assert a true and inclusive universality of persons, or it can institute a hierarchy in which only some persons are eligible to speak and others, by virtue of their exclusion from the universal point of view, cannot ‘speak’ without simultaneously deauthorizing that speech” (153). In the past, Moroccan cultural production has been devalued, eroticized, or “deauthorized” when compared

to that of Spain, due to Morocco's socioeconomic standing vis-à-vis Europe. The translation project undertaken here attempts to neutralize the inequities between Moroccan and Spanish cultural expressions, thereby giving language the possibility to empower, denounce, and reconcile. This analysis seeks to explore the ways in which *Cuentos de las dos orillas* utilizes narrative to both challenge and lend continuity to the sociopolitical and mythical relationship between Spain and Morocco via the themes of brotherhood, the performance of identity, and departure and return. While the anthology comprises eight short stories, I have chosen to explore the three that appear to most closely approach the topic of migration through the prism of shared memory. In my readings of "Morir lo más lejos posible" (To Die as Far as Possible), a tale of the rediscovery of a familial past and a shared identity with Morocco by Antonio Álamo; *La safôr* (*The Safôr*), a play by the collective *El Astillero* about a North African man who lingers every day by the service station phone and recounts his memories and experiences with other immigrants; and "Diario de un emigrante clandestino" (Diary of a Clandestine Immigrant), Rachid Nini's slice-of-life recounting of an illegal immigrant's daily passages through the underground metro, I trace the ways in which fictional narratives imagine the Hispano-Moroccan relationship and translate each nation's unique sense of identity across national boundaries.

In order to adequately approach the themes and preoccupations of *Cuentos de las dos orillas*, it is imperative to keep in mind the historical currents that shaped the periods before and after the 1999 commissioning of the texts and the subsequent 2006 publication of the stories as an anthology. The various stories not only are a reflection of their particular moment in time but also echo the presence that Spain and Morocco maintain within each other's national psyche. As Qureshi and Sells succinctly explain in their introduction to *The New Crusades: Constructing the Muslim Enemy*, "The continued existence within cultural

memory, however repressed, of this world constructed as ‘other’ makes impossible any secure division between ‘us’ and ‘them’ in terms of Islam and Europe or Islam and the West” (22). In the case of Spain and Morocco, a series of major historical events tying the nations together makes this an undeniable claim: the rise and fall of Al-Andalus, the creation of the Spanish protectorate over Western Sahara between 1884 and 1975, the participation of Moroccan soldiers during Spain’s infamous Civil War (1936–39), the polemical existence of the Spanish territories of Ceuta and Melilla in what Morocco claims to be its territory, and, most recently, the devastating terrorist attacks in Madrid on March 11, 2004. This last event, for which 15 Moroccans were indicted in Spanish courts, signaled a precarious shift in the Hispano-Moroccan relationship, the long-term results of which have yet to be determined.³

It is within this intricate historical framework that the themes of identity, departure, and return must be approached. Every one of the tales in *Cuentos de las dos orillas* (edited by José Monleón) references the ironic intimacy and common memory created by a series of armed conflicts between Spain and Morocco. This is true not only in terms of battles between the two nations but also in cases in which soldiers have participated in the other nation’s domestic conflicts. In “Morir lo más lejos posible,” Spanish writer Antonio Álamo’s narrator describes his trip to his recently deceased grandmother’s house to pick up items left to him. He is soon drawn to an item nobody else has shown any interest in: the military uniform of his deceased grandfather, a man who died long ago and whom the young man knew very little about. As the grandson places the uniform on his own body, he finds that it fits him perfectly. The dead man’s memories suddenly come to life and envelop the grandson, and he recalls in great detail his grandfather’s harrowing ordeal during the Rif War of the 1920s:⁴ “A la guerra con Marruecos fueron tres clases de personas: los tontos, los militares ambiciosos y los pobres, o sea, los soldados

de cuota que, como mi abuelo, no podían pagar el dinero indispensable para librarse de la mili . . . y ahora llevo su uniforme, el uniforme con el que mi abuelo se arrastró por las tierras africanas. La tela se ve muy gastada, y esta mancha de aquí, que se resiste a salir, podría ser de sangre. La sangre de un rebelde del Rif o la sangre de un compañero de armas.” (90; Three classes of people went to the war with Morocco: The simpletons, the ambitious military leaders, and the poor; that is to say, the foot soldiers who, like my grandfather, could not pay the money which was indispensable to be free of military service . . . and now I wear his uniform, the uniform in which my grandfather dragged himself over African lands . . . The fabric is very worn, and this stain here, that refuses to come out, could be blood. The blood of a Rif rebel or the blood of a comrade.) Certainly, the tone is bitter, but it is not directed at Moroccans. Rather, the grandson’s anger is at the political inequality and excess that has thrust the average Spanish and Moroccan soldier into a common fate. The narrator chooses to neutralize any ideological differences among the combatants by not differentiating or speculating on whose blood marks his grandfather’s uniform. All spilled blood is the same.

The author develops this idea further during the course of his tale, providing an insight into the mindset of those who actually fought the war. As the grandson continues his voyage of “remembering,”⁵ he comments, “Se decía del enemigo que era invisible” (92; It was said that the enemy was invisible). The enemy is not only perceived as foreign but also unviewed and unknown. Here, the Hispano-Moroccan relationship is defined by practices of “unseeing” the other. Making the enemy shapeless and anonymous was an attempt at overcoming the very real proximity and familiarity of the “other.” The narrative, however, ends on a note of recognition, in which the “other” becomes strikingly familiar. As the grandfather lay injured, he resigned himself to a certain death. When approached by the enemy soldier, however, the encounter is not one of aggression: “Pero, por algún motivo, el

rifeño le miraba casi con simpatía. Lo que tal vez aquel hombre comprendía es que la soldada española era también víctima de la codicia y la insensatez. El rifeño recogió los fusiles de los soldados muertos, los ató en la cabalgadura, se montó en el caballo y se despidió de mi abuelo, diciéndole: ‘Baraka lahu fik’, a lo que mi abuelo respondió ‘Baraka lahu fik’, o sea, que Dios nos guarde a unos y a otros.” (97; But, for some reason, the Rif soldier looked at him with what could almost be called sympathy. What that man perhaps understood was that the soldiers of Spain were also victims of avarice and senselessness. The Rif soldier collected the weapons of the dead soldiers, tied them to his cavalry, got on his horse, and bid good-bye to my grandfather, telling him “Baraka lahu fik,” to which my grandfather responded “Baraka lahu fik”; or rather, “May God keep us both.”)

The Rif soldier and the young Spaniard have, on some level, seen themselves reflected in each other. They have achieved a level of understanding that transcends national ideologies, honoring the sense of common experience and intimacy shared by soldiers who fight *together*. As the two soldiers part, they wish each other luck and protection in Arabic. Despite barriers of language and politics, the two men have effectively translated themselves and their languages to each other, thereby articulating their shared experiences. Ironically, the place of battle is not only a moment of hostility and violence but also the site of identification and recognition.

The grandson's actions and narrative function as a reenactment of the deceased relative's experience, “performing” the shared moment of articulation by dressing in the military uniform. This act of telling carries far-reaching implications, as Diana Taylor surmises, “The physical mechanics of staging can also keep alive an organizational infrastructure, a practice or know-how, an episteme, and a politics that goes beyond the explicit topic” (68). Through “the physical mechanics of staging,” the narrator has kept alive a fleeting moment between two neighboring combatants.

Thus the grandson's decision to wear the blood-soaked garment simultaneously evokes a past moment and brings it into the present, perpetuating the continuity of a common Hispano-Moroccan consciousness forged via battle and occupation.⁶

Performing Identity: *El Astillero*

This performance of identity, of playing out images of self and other, is an increasingly common way by which to explore changing social conditions in urban spaces. Artistic expressions such as movements of the body, voice, music, text, and pop culture are intersections in which one cultural tradition meets, clashes, and fuses with another. These are places of conflict but also locations of extraordinary opportunity. As Edward Said pointed out, "[C]ultures are often most naturally themselves when they enter into partnerships with each other, as in music with its extraordinary receptivity to developments in musics of other societies and continents. Much the same is true in literature, where readers of, for example, García Márquez, Mahfuz, and Oe exist far beyond the boundaries imposed by language and nation" ("Clash of Definitions," 81). In this context, contact across traditions represents not an erosion of culture but rather its highest form of expression. Receptivity and partnership via acting—that is, the telling of truth and fiction within an artificial, public space—is the means by which the Spanish acting troupe *El Astillero* chose to approach themes of contemporary Hispano-Moroccan encounters.

The short play *La safor* depicts these encounters through the thoughts and lamentations of its Moroccan narrator, as he navigates the underbelly of Spanish city life. The choice of the name *La safor* is significant to the overall message of the play, as the word *safor* is derived from the Arabic *sāfir*, which means "travel." "La safor" is also a region within the Spanish coastal province of Valencia, which overlooks the Mediterranean Sea. In this instance, the actor is in the position of playing a character while

simultaneously *playing out*⁷ the experience of *sāfir* in an interactive setting. The audience, generally one of mixed nationalities, is left to construct its own interpretation of the migrant's narrative. The play begins at a phone booth. A Moroccan man drinks a beer and waits patiently for the phone as he starts to weave his tale of remembering and forgetting:

En mi pueblo, a los de nuestra familia nos llamaban “los españoles.” Nos llamaban así porque ya estuvimos aquí. Hace tiempo . . . Gente de mi sangre estuvo aquí hace cientos de años. Nos gustaba esta tierra. Es igual que la tierra que hay en la otra orilla. El sol es el mismo y el aire es igual. La tierra tiene el mismo color. El mismo aire moviendo la misma tierra bajo el mismo sol . . .

Hace cientos de años que mi familia vivió aquí. Habían venido de la otra orilla. Hicieron una guerra muy larga contra los de aquí. Una de esas guerras que duran más que la vida. Una de esas guerras en que acabas conociendo a tu enemigo mejor que a tu hermano. Tu enemigo acaba siendo tu hermano. (109–10)

[In my village, my family was known as “the Spaniards.” They called us that because we had already been here. Long ago . . . People of my blood were here hundreds of years ago. We liked this land. It is the same as the land on the other shore. The sun is the same and the air is the same. The earth is the same color. The same air moving the same earth under the same sun . . .

Hundreds of years ago my family lived here. They had come from the other side. They waged a very long war against those from here. One of those wars that lasts more than a lifetime. One of those wars in which you wind up knowing your enemy better than your brother. Your enemy becomes your brother.]

This excerpt perfectly illustrates not only the sense of belonging and attachment that Moroccans feel toward Spain but also the construction of a lineage that stretches across both time and geographical space. Despite the political differences and the physical boundary presented by the Strait of Gibraltar, the Moroccan man's description of his relationship to Spain is one

of "sameness." The narrator continues his reverie by taking his feeling of recognition one step further: with time and proximity, the foe becomes a brother. He suggests that not only do Spaniards and Moroccans mirror one another, but they also share an affective relationship that both belies and alludes to a history of armed conflict.

This history, as well as the simultaneous enforcement and blurring of national borders by which it is accompanied, is a topic that often reappears in *Cuentos de las dos orillas*. The border, both real and imaginary, serves a multiple purpose in the national consciousness of both nations. It is at once a crossroads of political hegemony, a point of encounter, a place of affective and psychological identification, and a location to be either respected or transgressed. In all of its facets, the border represents a major component of the Hispano-Moroccan imaginary. In this respect, Parvati Nair's proposition on the meaning of "border" serves as a useful working definition of how cultural crossover subverts the intended hegemony of the border by highlighting its porosity:

The affirmation of collective identities and the play of power relations between such identities inevitably rely upon the construction of boundaries. The border, as a site of demarcation and as a point of contact and cultural exchange, selectively facilitates or obstructs passage . . . While state boundaries define the legal limits of sovereignty, these can nevertheless be subverted, challenged or reinforced, as the case may be, by cultural practices. Thus, the symbolic boundaries of culture seldom follow the spatial logic of state boundaries and can even force a refiguring of the latter through the impact of cultural practices on existing geopolitical mappings . . . By consequence, they become the nerve centers where Europeanness is both most visibly constructed and most predictably challenged. (22, 23)

By definition, a border emerges as a place by which national identities are both determined and questioned. It is a transitive site of encounter that bears witness to the trepidation one group feels

when faced with being “crossed” by another. A border does not simply protect national sovereignty; it functions as the (tenuous) safeguard of national identity. The transgression of this border forces a mutual psychic shift. The act of “crossing over” poses the risk of loss of self on either side.

This possibility of loss and transformation is alternately resisted and embraced by immigrant subjects. The immigrant is performing two identities: one that corresponds to and echoes the homeland and another that must understand and acclimate to the “host” country. The striking differences and particular similarities between Morocco and Spain make this duality all the more complex, as the individual attempts to navigate between what is “same” and what is “other.” This requires transformative operations that allow the individual to find a “border zone,” a comfortable place that is neither one nor the other. In *La safar*, the narrator communicates his process of reidentification via an encounter with Algerian immigrants. The Moroccan man hears music that is new and pleasing to him coming out of a car being driven by Algerians. Intrigued, he approaches the young men to inquire about their music: “Entonces me contaron que ahora hay muchos grupos y cantantes que triunfan en el mundo mezclando la tradición y los ritmos actuales. Saqué un papel y apunté los nombres. Ahora estoy ahorrando y cuando vaya a la ciudad me compraré algunos de sus discos: Rachid Taha, Chab Samir, Khaled, Habib Koité. Aquí los tengo todos apuntados para que no se me olviden sus nombres. Y así mezclaremos a Camarón con Omara Portuondo con los músicos africanos.” (120; Then they told me that now there are many groups and singers that succeed in the world mixing tradition and contemporary rhythms. I took out a piece of paper and took down the names. Now I am saving money, and when I go into the city I’ll buy some of their CDs: Rachid Taha, Chab Samir, Khaled, Habib Koité. I have them all written down so I won’t forget their names. And so we will mix Camarón with Omara Portuondo and African

musicians.) For the narrator, this encounter presents a turning point. He has discovered a creative voice that articulates from the "border" place that he now inhabits. He now belongs to a community, one that is not fully North African or European but both. These new artists represent a point of fusion between seemingly incongruous languages, cultures, and traditions. The protagonist takes this discovery one step further, referencing fusion music that reflects even wider postcolonial patterns of immigration. Camarón, a legend of Spanish flamenco, becomes crossed with Omara Portuondo, a renowned Cuban singer. For the narrator, the performances of these artists allow for a globalized community of those who have "crossed over," or undertaken their own operations of *traslado*. It makes sense, then, that *La safor* is meant to be told on a stage, as part of a theatrical mis-en-scène.

Following this encounter, the Moroccan immigrant reaches a point of acceptance, embracing his new position in Spain. As the play closes, he exclaims, "La tierra tiene el mismo sabor que mi tierra. Las naranjas son las mismas naranjas. Pero no es mi tierra. Sí, aquí lo puedo sentir. No es mía. No es de nadie. Estoy en casa. VALE" (123; The soil has the same taste as my soil. The oranges are the same oranges. But it is not my land. Yes, I can feel it here. It is not mine. It is no one's. I am home. VALE) Spain is his new residence, as he embraces the familiarity of the land while recognizing that it is not his. The narrator does, however, point out that the land belongs to no one, thereby challenging the predominance of national borders and hermetic national identity. He closes with "VALE," a typically Spaniard colloquialism used either to express agreement or to bid good-bye to a familiar person. At this point the play ends, and it is assumed that the protagonist will continue to embrace the shifting place that he has come to call home.

El Traslado: Imagining Departure and Return

At the end of *La safor*, it appears that the narrator finally achieves a sense of location, even if it is one of constant transition. Given that many immigrants continue to visit their country of origin, it would be plausible to assume that the narrator will continue to move between Morocco and Spain, maintaining a continuous point of *traslado* between the two. Certainly, one of the primary characteristics of the tales compiled in *Cuentos de las dos orillas* is a fixation with this *traslado*, a word that may mean both the transplanting of a person from one place to another or the act of translating between languages. It is also worth noting that the term “traslado” is euphemistically used to describe the deportation of illegal immigrants. When viewed in the context of the Hispano-Moroccan relationship, *el traslado* emerges as a highly charged psychic, linguistic, and geographical term.

Writer Rachid Nini approaches this phenomenon in his tale “El diario de un emigrante clandestino” (Diary of a Clandestine Immigrant). The author tells the story of an immigrant’s transitive existence as he seeks a life outside of Morocco. The man’s narrative is both introspective and observant, exploring the affective experiences of the immigrant as well as his impressions of the changing world around him. While the story is told through a variety of cities, the primary setting is always a place of transition. As such, much of the telling takes place in or around means of transportation: “Me gusta tomarme el desayuno al apuntar el día en la estación de viajeros. La estación al norte de Barcelona parece espléndida como todas las estaciones de las grandes urbes . . . Sobre las paredes cuelgan fotos de miembros de la organización vasca ETA. El cartel dice que son elementos muy peligrosos y que todo aquel que los vea los denuncie inmediatamente. Sus rasgos en el cartel aparentan lo contrario. Hay incluso entre ellos a una muchacha que sonrío.” (75; I like taking my coffee and starting my day

at the traveler's station. The station in the north part of Barcelona seems splendid like all stations in great cities . . . On the wall hang photos of members of the Basque organization ETA. The poster says that they are dangerous individuals and that all who see them should turn them in immediately. The faces on the poster say otherwise. As a matter of fact, among them is a girl who seems to be smiling.) It is notable that the protagonist chooses the train station as a comfortable place at which to begin his day. The train station is a "nowhere" location, a default point that must be crossed en route to somewhere else. By definition, the train station facilitates the *traslado*. The narrator's next curious points of association are his observations of the ETA posters. ETA, the militant Basque separatist group, is infamous in Spain for their acts of terrorism in Madrid and elsewhere. Not only is the narrator drawn to the subjects considered outsiders within Spanish society, but he offers a humanizing gaze to the faces on the wanted posters. Rather than being intimidated by the idea of ETA, he experiences a curious connection with the accused. He is, from the outset, on the outside looking in, and he identifies with the Basque frustration of inhabiting a country that is not quite one's own.

This sense of discomfort, coupled with constant movement, is repeatedly presented in the text. As the protagonist steps down into an urban metro system, he is transported yet again to what Michel Foucault would term a kind of heterotopia, a "counter-site" where "real" places in society are simultaneously represented, negated, and distorted:⁸ "En el interior laberíntico del metro me siento como si me hubiese convertido en una rata pequeña . . . Desde abajo la cosa parece como si fuese un paseo a las entrañas de la tierra. Al menos para una persona como yo acostumbrada toda su vida anterior a andar descubierto por la tierra. Los laberintos del metro son el subconsciente de la ciudad." (84; In the labyrinthine interior of the metro I feel as if I had been converted into a small rat . . . from down under it all

seems like a path to the depths of the earth. At least for someone like me, who in his previous life was accustomed to strolling upon the earth uncovered. The labyrinths of the metro are the unconscious of the city.) In this setting, however, the narrator shifts to a more intimate mode of discourse, revealing the loss of self he experiences while in transit. This loss is not simply one of identity but rather one of humanity. He feels reduced and dehumanized to complete anonymity,⁹ turned into a scurrying rat by the mazelike underground environment. Interestingly, this is accompanied by the demarcation of a life before and a life after “crossing over.” His *vida anterior*, to which he returns in memory, is lived freely above ground, while the immigrant experience requires shadowy invisibility. To the clandestine immigrant, this urban labyrinth is the greatest illustration of the city’s sense of itself and his place within it.

The narrator must constantly maneuver to create a sense of place within this altered consciousness. This requires a negotiation of identity not only vis-à-vis Europeans but, more specifically, in regard to others of the same ancestry. As he talks to other North Africans during his travels, the topic turns to ethnicity and national identity: “El muchacho me preguntó por mis orígenes, le dije que era berebér . . . Temí que la conversación tornara en una pesada conferencia sobre el origen de las razas; zanjé la cuestión diciendo que todos nosotros somos marroquíes con una sola identidad. Pensé desde luego en el carné de identidad . . .” (79; The guy asked me about my origins. I told him I was Berber . . . I feared the conversation would take an unpleasant turn toward the origin of the races; I dodged the matter by saying that we are all Moroccan with a single identity. I then thought of my identity card . . .) The narrator, unlike many who move through immigrant spaces, carries an official identification card that lists him as a journalist. He possesses credentials that in some way legitimize him in Western eyes and give him an advantage in his transition. He is well aware that not all Moroccans have “una sola

identidad," particularly given that he previously referred to himself as Berber. While the narrator is interested in conversing with other travelers, he attempts to deviate and neutralize discussions of race and identification in order to avoid questions of class and education. In Morocco, Arabic is the conquering language that dominates culture and official education, while Berber languages are subsumed and considered "common" or "lesser." He recognizes this and is adept at the sociopolitical game, referring back to the hierarchies of his country of origin when speaking to other Maghrebis but deferring back to a collective or totalizing Moroccan (commonly generalized as "Arab") identity when speaking of Moroccans in a Western context. The protagonist must then undertake a process of departure and return not only in physical terms but on ideological ones as well. He must decide who he is to whom and at what time(s).

This operation may be viewed as a kind of translation act in and of itself, one that requires mental processes of departure and return in order to realize a new "reading" of culture and place. If the model of translation presented by Annie Brisset is transferred to the idea of *traslado*, Rachid Nini's text emerges as one that portrays and manages a series of urban and ethnic codes: "Translation is a dual act of communication. It presupposes the existence, not of a single code, but of two distinct codes, the 'source language' and the 'target language.' The fact that the two codes are not isomorphic creates obstacles for the translative operation" (337). The act of translation, much like the *traslado*, implies moving between two destinations or codes that may not directly correspond to each other. In his travels through the subspaces of the urban environment, his interpretations of cityscapes, and his identity games, the protagonist in "El diario de un emigrante clandestino" provides this vision of contemporaneous recognition and defamiliarization. It may then be said that the depiction of departure and return in the compilation of stories not only transcends simple geographical transit but

also alludes to emotional and psychological practices of leaving and arriving. It is this very circularity of thought, presence, and memory that ties together the narratives in *Cuentos de las dos orillas* and embodies the Hispano-Moroccan relationship as a whole.

Being and Leaving: The *Traslado* of Memory and Self

If *Cuentos de las dos orillas* manages to “bridge” the strait by linking Spanish and Arabic and attempting to reconcile national imaginaries, novels such as *Jo també sóc catalana* by Catalan-Moroccan writer Najat El Hachmi and *Partir* by Franco-Moroccan author Tahar ben Jelloun go on to widen the scope and reach of that interpellation. Not only do these two novels continue to challenge the notion of leaving, staying, and belonging; they do so in the language of each author’s adopted homeland, Catalan and French respectively. This opens up the linguistic horizons of the Hispano-Moroccan relationship, thereby expanding Spain’s dynamic of memory and return into a Mediterranean phenomenon of *traslado*: the translation/transfer of selves, identities, and cultural memories between places of origin and sites of arrival. This invokes what Moroccan critic and novelist Abdelkébir Khatibi termed “une pensée autre”¹⁰ (an other thinking), a thought process originating not from one “side” or another but from both and neither. The intricate migratory relationship between Spain and Morocco becomes further internationalized, requiring a new kind of “border thinking”¹¹ that acknowledges that both immigrant and “national” are inhabiting spaces of continually changing geographic and psychic parameters.

Perhaps more so than the collection of short stories *Cuentos de las dos orillas*, novels such as *Partir* and *Jo també sóc catalana* attempt to embody the experience of a *traslado*, fleshing it out as a lived experience by a multidimensional human subject/body. Far more dangerous than the spectral “other,” the immigrants of these novels are corporealized, bodied, *realized* specters come

to inhabit a newly imagined Europe. They are eminently present and recognizable as neighbors, friends, enemies, or lovers. Rather than subscribing to the traditional fixity and stability of a nationality and culture one is born into, characters in immigrant novels reinterpret and in a sense translate their experience into one that conforms to the new cultural and national borders they have traced for themselves. *Jo també sóc catalana*, whose title immediately asserts "I Too am Catalan," is one of the more resonant recent works to declare that an immigrant may possess a viable identity while belonging to more than one place—in other words, the immigrant's varied frames of cultural reference mean that he or she is in a sense always traveling, always renewing, always elsewhere. This reminds us of Chicana theorist Gloria Anzaldúa's classic work *The Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza*, in which she reflects on the *travesía*: "Every increment of consciousness, every step forward is a *travesía*, a crossing. I am again an alien in a new territory. And again, and again. But if I escape the conscious awareness, escape 'knowing,' I won't be moving. Knowledge makes me more aware, it makes me more conscious. 'Knowing' is painful because after 'it' happens I can't stay in the same place and be comfortable. I am no longer the same person I was before" (70). While Anzaldúa speaks of the US-Mexican border, her insistence upon a constant state of crossover, a sense of altered awareness of self, and a spiritual renewal necessary for survival are equally germane to the ragged edges delimiting Morocco and Spain.¹²

The migrant subject, be it Anzaldúa's Chicana/o or the Moroccan entering Spain, embodies and incarnates the *traslado*, constantly reinterpreting itself and evolving in its environment. In *Jo també sóc catalana*, however, this multiplicity presents as a richness of human experience that adds to the possibility of "Europeanness," rather than precluding it.¹³

The novel makes this clear as it relates to the female narrator's journey of *becoming* both a Moroccan and a European. The

book is a first-person narrative of a young Moroccan-Spanish woman in her twenties and her personal recollections and internal struggles with identity, language, and motherhood during that time. Having emigrated from Morocco as a young girl, El Hachmi settles into the small city of Vic, in Catalunya. It is there that she grows up, attains native fluency in Catalán, and becomes a parent and a writer. Yet, even as she considers herself fully a *catalana*, she discovers that her role as a mother brings to the forefront a discomfort with her own background that she has never before identified or acknowledged. This new journey into motherhood leads the protagonist to question her faith, her relationship to her own parents, concepts of nationality, and allegiances, all of which are ensconced within the overwhelming pull of her childhood memories of Morocco. This becomes clear when she speaks of being called *Imma* (“mother” in her native Berber language) by her son: “*Imma* era veure’m reflectida en els teus ulls amb la mateixa imatge de la meva mare, quelcom molt a dins meu es removia. Mama és molt més neutre, és una imatge de mare que no conec, que no he palpat de prop.” (23; *Imma* was to see myself reflected in the same image of my mother, an image that is removed from myself. Mama is much more neutral, it’s an image of motherhood that I do not know, that I have not felt for myself.) The narrator feels relief once her son abandons calling her *Imma* rather than a sense of loss or sadness. It is at this point that she begins to reassess how she felt about her own mother and childhood and what components of her own experiences she prefers to keep to herself or pass on to the next generation. She would like to create a sense of history and continuity for her son, but she realizes that this is in some respects impossible, as her own story has become distorted and nonlinear over time. El Hachmi realizes that her journey away from Morocco did not start and end upon her arrival at Vic, but rather it has been a continuous process of *traslado*, one that her son will have to endure in his own way despite being European-born.

Indeed, El Hachmi understands that her son will likely consider himself Catalan but worries that his skin tone will nevertheless betray him as an outsider in a society where she herself is not always fully accepted. The protagonist decides that she will attempt to give her son the best of both worlds, immersing him in the Amazigh language during his early years and "arming" him to one day find his own cultural path. Interestingly, El Hachmi finds herself in a cycle of circularity between "here" (her present-day life in Spain) and "there," the life she left behind in Morocco, one that has receded but not disappeared from her consciousness. Watching her son in a context so different from that in which she grew up, she comes to accept the divide that now separates her from her own parents and that may one day distance her from her son's frame of experience. Now more aware of her dual reality, she states that "traçant amb els anys i com aquest va marcant una nova manera de fer, pensar en cada passa, en cada esbós traçat en el mapa del destí per tal de madurar un pensament que ja no és el dels nostres pares, però que no és del tot el de les persones que ens envolten, el autòctons. Un pensament de frontera que serveix per entendre dues realitats diferenciades, una manera de fer, d'actuar, de ser, de sentir, d'estimar, una manera de buscar la felicitat a cavall entre dos mons." (14; tracing over the years and how this marks a new way of doing, of thinking about each step, about each sketch traced on the map of destiny so as to develop a thought that is no longer that of our parents, but that is not entirely that of the people who surround us, the native [Catalans]. A frontier way of thinking that serves to understand two different realities, a way of living, of acting, of being, of feeling, of loving, a way of seeking happiness straddling two worlds.) Najat El Hachmi takes upon herself the role of being a cultural bridge for her son, which requires her to examine her own past and come to peace with the many facets of herself she had previously compartmentalized.

In her roles as nurturer, interpreter, and migrant woman of color, Najat El Hachmi's work dovetails with the classic 1981 anthology *This Bridge Called My Back: Writings by Radical Women of Color*, which was prepared for reissue following the world events of 9/11. The anthology gathers the writings of multiethnic (mostly black and Latina) women writers in the United States as they struggle to find a sense of place despite a status of ethnic or sexual outsider. In the updated 2001 foreword, editor Gloria Anzaldúa recognizes the wider global appeal of the work in the twenty-first century:

Liminality, the in-between space of *nepantla* [an Aztec, specifically Nahuatl term meaning "between," or a reference to a middle space] is the space most of us occupy. We do not inhabit *un mundo* [one world] but many . . . We must be wary of assimilation but not cultural *mes-tizaje*. Instead we must become *nepantleras* and build bridges between all these worlds as we traffic back and forth between them, detribalizing and retribalizing in different and various communities. The firing [trial-by-fire of transformation and experience] has bequeathed us *el conocimiento* (insight) that human and the universe are in a symbiotic relationship that we live in a state of deep interconnectedness en *un mundo zurdo* (a left handed world). We are not alone in our struggles, and never have been . . . we must now more than ever open our minds to other's realities . . . may our voices proclaim the bonds of bridges. (xxxvii, xxxix)

As Anzaldúa demonstrates, it is women like El Hachmi, often the keepers of tradition and cultural continuity, who are often tasked with bridging what is fractured and translating the indecipherable, starting with themselves. While Najat El Hachmi is of North African and not Latina origin, her writing speaks to a global phenomenon of *traslado* that Europe must now come to terms with. The operation she is undertaking as a woman, mother, and new Spanish national is one of re-rooting—taking the seeds of one realm (in this case her native Morocco) and planting/bridging them in another in order to cultivate something and someone new.

When Najat El Hachmi writes of "each sketch traced on the map of destiny," she speaks not only of her own life and that

of her child but of a kind of *re-routing* of Europe as a whole. Here, she echoes James Clifford's work, which points out that "dwelling was understood to be the local ground of collective life, travel a supplement; roots always precede routes. But what would happen, I began to ask, if travel were untethered, seen as a complex and pervasive spectrum of human experiences? Practices of displacement might emerge as *constitutive* of cultural meanings rather than as their simple transfer or extension" (3). In the case of contemporary immigrants to Europe, displacement has become *constitutive* not only of cultural meanings but of the definition of nationhood and belonging within/without boundaries. No longer is the story of Europe written from an imperial, linear perspective. The re-routing of Europe is a reseeing of origins and direction; it is multiple nationhoods that exist not despite constant crossings and intersections but *because* of them. If the *roots* of the nation have traditionally been ensconced in native status, in land of birth, and in fixity of place, the variegated *routes* of the inhabitants of modern Europe are transforming and molding the meaning and relevance of national boundaries themselves. Just as Najat El Hachmi writes of "sketches on the map of destiny," so are immigrants as a whole leaving their mark upon the map of the European continent, giving rise to new iterations of what it is to be *of* and *within* Europe.

Deciphering immigrant identity *of* and *within* Europe is not without its ambiguities and set of difficult choices. The transitory subject must decide what cultural aspects to bring to their new location, which to abandon, and which to transform. When an aspect of one's "homeland" self is disparaged in the host country, the discontinuities in identity are brought to the forefront, magnified, and challenged. Even while she herself no longer subscribes to any religion, Najat El Hachmi's narrative nevertheless addresses instances in which she feels "more Muslim than ever." When the Catalans in her community belittle Muslims and Arabs

as a whole while gathering signatures against the building of a local mosque, she feels betrayed by other *catalanes*:

—Tots sabem els problemes que porta la religió musulmana arreu del món: només cal que mirem cap als països àrabs i ho veurem. Si no, guaitau el cas d'Algèria les morts que hi ha.

Vaig voler parlar, indignada, ferida en un orgull redescobert, sentint-me més musulmana que mai. No eren les paraules el que ferien, era l'estrèpit de tota aquella gent que es baravalla per firmar primer, que proclamaven, fanatisme de míting:

—Sí, sí, sí! Que se'n vagin al seu país a fer-hi una mesquita, que si nosaltres anéssim allà segur que no ens deixarien construir-hi una església. (119)

[—We all know of the problems that the Muslim religion has caused around the world. Just look at the Arab countries and you'll see. If not, check out the case of Algeria and all the deaths there.

Hearing them speak, I was indignant, wounded in a rediscovered pride, and I felt more Muslim than ever. It wasn't the words that they were saying, it was the raucous din of all of those people waiting to sign, proclaiming with group fanaticism:

—Yes, yes, yes! Let them go to their country and make a mosque there; surely if we were there they wouldn't let us build a church!]

Not only does El Hachmi's character feel betrayed by people she considered friends and neighbors, but her efforts at distinguishing herself as a Moroccan-Catalan *individual* are stymied by stereotyped perceptions of her as one of an amorphous "them." In this recounting, she becomes representative of a hostile and invading group whose values are seen as incongruous to those of the "host" country, not *her* country. By being grouped with Algerians, the particularities of Moroccan politics and faith are subsumed to a monolithic image of the *moro* that encompasses not only Morocco but also every other country with a primarily Islamic population. Walking down her street, El Hachmi experiences a moment of alienation in which she becomes invisible as Najat the woman, writer, and mother and instead becomes

nameless and foreign. It may be said then that Najat El Hachmi's act of writing and retelling is a means by which to undo and bypass this erasure, thereby creating herself in her own image and leaving behind a testament to her unique experience. This may also be seen as a way of equipping her son with a point of departure that was unavailable to her, one that he may be able to connect with as he questions his own roots one day.¹⁴

Spain in French: Tahar ben Jelloun's *Partir*

Certainly, the process of re-rooting/re-routing exemplified by Najat El Hachmi's work has much to do with the mobility of immigrants and the increased accessibility and distribution of immigrant-produced media. Circulating as widely as the immigrants themselves, these novels, music, films, and other modes of communication traverse borders so easily that the border itself becomes a mere formality. As the needs, numbers, and communities of immigrants vary across Europe, so do the patterns of movement and circulation. Cultural production has recognized this, becoming increasingly multiethnic and plurilingual. In light of this, Tahar ben Jelloun's novel *Partir* is of particular interest due to its distinct thematic and linguistic choices: here is a Moroccan author who writes in French about a young unemployed Moroccan *diplômé's* obsession with migrating to Spain, not France. The author not only has noted the change in migration patterns but uses his novel to comment on how Spain is seeing itself/being seen differently vis-à-vis Morocco following the end of Franco's military dictatorship.

This is evident in a conversation Tahar ben Jelloun crafts between the protagonist, Azel, and an older man he comes across. As Azel recounts his desire to reach Spain and escape the frustrating monotony of his life, the man he converses with shares his memories of a very different Spain than the young man has imagined: "À votre âge, moi aussi j'ai eu ce rêve. Même

si les deux situations ne sont pas comparables. L'Espagne était invivable. Franco ne voulait pas mourir et son système religieux et militaire sévissait partout . . . Toute l'Espagne sentait cette odeur de mois; on étouffait. Le pays ne vibrait que pour le foot et la corrida.” (61; At your age, I too had that dream, even if the two situations are not comparable. Spain was unlivable. Franco didn't want to die and his religious and military system poisoned everything . . . All of Spain had an odor of decay; it stifled you. The country was only alive through soccer and the corrida.) Earlier in the twentieth century, Morocco had watched its ostensible neighbor slide into a state of decline and stasis, leading to a sense of estrangement from a country it had such long-standing ties with. Interestingly, the novel expresses that the Moroccans began to view Spain the way Spain had long been viewed by the rest of “old” Europe—as a place of non-progress, the keeper of a foreign past, kept alive and coherent only through its exotic (and bloody) rituals such as the *corrida* (bullfighting) and its love of sport. In this manner, *Partir* undertakes an interesting operation of historical re-viewing. Tahar ben Jelloun reminds the reader that in the past, Morocco has been the one to view Spain as backward, while Spain has not always been so easily accepted by Western Europe at large. The author underscores that it is only in the late eighties that Spain became an attractive destination for immigrants, thereby making Spain's present grasp upon its “desirable” European identity seem more tenuous.

Yet Spain's geographical location positions the country in a space of possible economic and social recovery that is inaccessible to Morocco, as well as entry into the sphere of European power. Predictably, the Moroccan observer's gaze and opinions regarding Spain change over the years:

Tu sais, de Maroc on voit l'Espagne, mais la réciproque n'est pas vraie.
Les Espagnols ne nous voient pas, ils s'en foutent, ils n'ont que faire de

notre pays. (94) . . . C'est instinctif chez eux, dès qu'ils voient un Moro, ils se méfient, ils voient *una mala pata, una cosa negra* . . . le pays va vite, l'Europe le tire vers le haut et l'éloigne de nous, avant on pensait qu'on était proches, je veux dire que nous étions voisins, quatorze kilomètres, quatorze petits kilomètres, quatorze malheureux kilomètres nous séparaient, en vérité il y a des milliers de kilomètres entre eux et nous, pour eux Marocains veut dire musulmans, ils se souviennent de ce que disait l'Église des musulmans, rien de très bon il fait dire. (192)

[You know, from Morocco you can see Spain, but the opposite is not true. The Spaniards do not see us, they don't give a damn, they want nothing to do with our country . . . It's instinctive to them, from the moment they see a Moro, they are wary, they see a *mala pata*, a *black thing* . . . the country is moving quickly, Europe is pulling them higher and farther away from us, before we thought we were close, I mean to say that we were neighbors, fourteen kilometers, fourteen small kilometers, fourteen cursed kilometers separate us; in reality there are thousands of kilometers between us and them, for them Moroccans mean Muslims, they remember what the Church says of Muslims, they have nothing good to say.]

There is no longer a sense of shared perspective and reciprocity between Morocco and Spain. In this exchange, Spain no longer appears as familiar and possible. It is now far away, foreign, hostile, *European*. In joining the larger unit of the European Union, it would seem that Spain is presented as having embarked upon a project of cutting ties with its entrenched Moroccan past. This narrative represents an attempt at *re-rooting* of Spanish history, while Tahar Ben Jelloun's treatment of Spain in his novel may also be seen as constitutive of a *re-routing* of Moroccan (post)colonial narratives. While contemporary Moroccan history has often been linked directly to France and immigration patterns are routinely traced to the French *métropole*, Tahar Ben Jelloun retraces the map of Moroccan movement in contemporary Europe, while linguistically and thematically including Spain in French immigration discourse. Spain's "problem" is no longer its own; it is now Europe's problem. As a consequence of becoming part of the EU, Spain has become part of the route of immigration as

well. It is constantly reminded that its borders are no longer simply Spanish, but European, and thereby a gateway.

Partir does not hesitate to engage with topics of heated deliberation in current European policy debates. By touching upon how Spain's more recent Moroccan immigration has simultaneously pulled the two countries together (opening a flow of human transit that was essentially closed during the Franco regime) and drawn them apart (in light of Spain's push to become part of the European Union and given the economic disparity between Spain and Morocco), Tahar Ben Jelloun opens the door to discussing how, when, and why a number of migrants are being recruited by those preaching extreme interpretations of Islamic beliefs. The main character, Azel, finally reaches Barcelona, where he is having difficulty adapting and is occasionally prostituting himself to make ends meet. It is at this moment that Azel is approached by a character named Ahmad Abd-al-Wahab, a Saudi who practices Wahhabism.¹⁵ While Azel remains unconvinced, his newfound acquaintance tries to utilize the history of Spain and Morocco to his advantage in his recruitment efforts:

Tu comprends, mon frère, nous sommes ici dans le pays de nos ancêtres, ceux qu'Isabel la Catholique a expulsés après avoir fait ériger des bûchers où des hommes de foi, des musulmans, dont nous sommes les descendants, ont été brûlés. Elle a ordonné la démolition des lieux de prière, elle a obligé ceux qui n'ont pas pu fuir à se convertir en catholicisme, elle a fait interdire l'écriture arabe et le port des vêtements traditionnels. C'était il y a longtemps cinq cents ans, mais la brûlure, est toujours là, dans nos coeurs, dans le Coeur de tout musulman, de tout Arabe. L'islam a été chassé de ce pays. Il est de notre devoir de le faire revenir, de le faire respecter. (286)

[You understand, my brother, we are here in the country of our ancestors, those that Queen Isabel the Catholic expelled after having erected pyres upon which the men of faith, the Muslims, those from whom we are descended, were burned. She ordered the demolition of places of prayer, forced everyone to convert to Catholicism, prohibited Arabic writing, and the wearing of [our] traditional clothes. It was long ago, five hundred

years, but the burn is still there, in our hearts, in the Heart of all Muslims, of all Arabs. Islam was chased from this country. It is our duty to make it return, to make it be respected.]"¹⁶

In this text, Tahar Ben Jelloun makes it clear that the history of Spain and its migratory dynamics not only pull it closer to Europe politically but place Spain in the position of a territory to be *reclaimed* by both the Arab Islamic and Christian European traditions, which is not the case with the rest of Europe. Interestingly, however, Azel rejects the attempts at recruitment to Wahhabism, preferring instead to continue trying to build a life for himself in the Spain he has so long dreamed of.

This determination to remain in Spain and continue a life in Europe comes at a cost for Azel. Caught in a raid by immigration, he faces deportation. In order to avoid "la honte, la *hchouma*, la *hegra*, l'humiliation" (289; the embarrassment, the shame) of being sent home as an empty-handed criminal, Azel decides to use Abd-al-Wahab's approaches to his advantage. While in his jail cell, Azel engages a police officer and makes an offer:

Azel sortit la carte d'Abd-al-Wahab et la lui tendit.

—Cet homme m'a abordé pour que je rejoigne un mouvement de fidèles musulmans, une sorte d'amicale de musulmans en Espagne. Il tient le discours de la revanche, il m'a parlé d'Isabel la Catholique, de l'Andalousie, du retour de l'islam en terre chrétienne et mécréante . . . J'ai rendez-vous avec lui la semaine prochaine. Donnez-moi une chance.

C'est ainsi qu'Azel devint indicateur pour la police espagnole. Il sauva sa peau mais vendit son âme. Peut-être pour une bonne cause. En vérité, il n'avait que faire d'être sur le bon chemin ou non. Son désespoir l'avait aguerri. (291)

[Azel took out Abd-al-Wahab's card and handed it to him.

—This man approached me so that I would join a group of Muslims, a kind of friendly advance to the Muslims of Spain. He spoke of revenge, he talked to me about Isabel the Catholic, of Andalusia, of a return of Islam to the disbelieving Christian lands . . . I have a meeting with him next week. Give me a chance.

And so that is how Azel became an informant for the Spanish police. He saved his skin but lost his soul. Perhaps for a good cause. In reality, he didn't give a damn about whether it was right or not. His despair and desperation had hardened him.]

In the weeks following his decision to inform on militant Islamic movements in Spain, Azel is a torn man. He feels physically ill, as if “des insectes minuscules parcouraient des membres” (291; minuscule insects were running through his limbs). Azel attains his dream of remaining in Spain (legally), but he feels an instant unease and disconnect with the duplicitous life he has chosen.

By day, Azel is placed in a bank position to appear legitimate. By night, he collects information on extremists that he later provides to the Spanish authorities. The state of his psyche begins to reflect the duality of his life. Azel begins to avoid alcohol in accordance with the Muslim faith (something he had not adhered to before) but self-medicates with copious amounts of *kif*. He clings tightly to his life in Europe but longs for the Morocco of his memories and mourns the things he has done to leave Tangier: theft, prostitution, leaving his mother, selling hashish, and now being a police informant. Azel does not support acts of terrorism but nevertheless hates himself for informing on other Muslims. In order to survive mentally, he philosophizes and rationalizes his decisions, detaching emotionally from the tribulations of the present:

Il pensait à Kafka et à *La métamorphose*. Il ne l'avait pas lu mais il se souvient d'un cours magistral de son professeur de philo sur le sujet. Je vais me transformer, devenir quelqu'un d'autre, après tout ce sera une bonne chose, je passe d'un personnage à un autre, j'y ajoute un peu de trahison, un peu de délation, même si c'est pour la bonne cause, quelle cause au fait? C'est quand même dégeulasse d'être un indicateur de flics . . .

Son esprit n'avait presque pas des scrupules. Parti pour ne pas revenir. Parti pour toujours. Parti pour mourir. Il avait prévu une visite au

cimetière de la ville. Si je meurs, enterrez-moi ici, dans ce pays dont j'ai tant rêvé. (292)

[He thought of Kafka and *Metamorphosis*. He hadn't read it but he remembered a lecture given by his philosophy professor on the subject. I'm going to transform myself, become someone else, after all it will be a good thing, I go from one character to another, I add a bit of treachery, a little betrayal, even if it's for a good cause, what cause in fact? It's disgusting nevertheless to be a police informant . . .

His spirit no longer had scruples. Left never to return. Left for forever. Left to die. He had planned a visit to the city cemetery. When I die, bury me here, in this country of which I have dreamed so much.]

Azel's character here evolves from a directionless young man desperate to migrate to a very intricate character caught between complex religious and political forces much bigger than himself. Unlike Najat El Hachmi, he is placed in an extremely charged legal situation and forced to choose one purported "side" of the East/West conflict or another. In his desire to stay in Europe, he chooses to turn against a side of Islam that he did not agree with but in so doing experiences a nagging sense of betrayal against "his own." In a political realm currently dominated by fears of terrorism and infiltration, Azel embodies everyone's worst nightmare: a double agent, a turncoat, a paradox.

Azel quickly senses that his status is unsustainable and is proven correct in the most horrific of ways when the Spanish police officer he informs to finds him dead in his apartment: "Azel était par terre, la gorge tranchée, la tête dans une flaque de sang. Comme un mouton de l'Aïd-el-Kébir, les Frères l'avaient égorgé." (306; Azel was on the ground, throat slit, his head in a pool of blood. The Brothers had slaughtered him like a lamb for Aïd-el-Kébir.) Killed by militant Muslims for working with the "enemy," Azel is in fact betrayed by both sides. He was not sufficiently protected by the Spanish police who benefited from his knowledge, and he was ultimately murdered by those who shared his faith, albeit very different interpretations of it. Unlike

Najat El Hachmi in *Jo també sóc catalana*, Azel's character is not able to successfully bridge or translate his identity into a European context. He is ultimately consumed by the pull of "both shores" and becomes a casualty of fundamentalism. Yet, in a sense, he does achieve his dream of avoiding deportation and remaining in Spain, preferring to risk his life and die there than be sent back to a Moroccan homeland where he sees no prospects. It is in these passages that the circularity of the Hispano-Moroccan memory relationship, the spectrality of its Moorish history, and the possibilities and limitations of *traslado* all come together. *Partir*, along with *Jo també sóc catalana*, displays and challenges the layers of Spanish identity in an age of globalization, posing the question of whether Spain will be led by its roots, its re-routes, or both.

Conclusion

In interviews, Najat El Hachmi often says that "con la literatura . . . se pueden conciliar mundos que parecen irreconciliables" (with literature, it is possible to reconcile worlds that seem irreconcilable).¹⁷ This view supports the notion that the arts are creating a bridge between seemingly disparate identities, thereby allowing for the opportunity of a modern rereading of Spanish and European culture(s). The texts analyzed here demonstrate how the migrant subject employs shared memory and the experience of continuous transit to create new spaces of cultural *possibility*. As Benita Sampedro Vizcaya states, "This incessant movement—between homeland and abroad, but also between life and death, and between past and present—is instrumental in forging cultural hybridity. Displacement, with accompanying memories of dislocation and violence, is so central . . . that it undercuts the importance of territorial space and territorial boundaries as markers of 'home'" (7). Through writing, the immigrant individual is able to locate and *speak from* uncomfortable intersections,

rather than become mired within them. It is at these junctures that identity, language, and the meaning of nationhood are reassessed and reshaped. By sharing, inhabiting, and appropriating memory and cultural capital, the migrant proposes new sites for "home." It may be interesting to view *Cuentos de las dos orillas*, *Jo també sóc catalana*, and *Partir* as constructive of an/other space of enunciation, one that echoes Foucault's concept of the heterotopia. Literary texts of and about the immigrant experience both announce and create a new spatial and expressive mode, one that circumvents monolithic identities in favor of transitory ones.

Certainly, these texts—written in a cross-section of languages, through frontiers, and of/within sites of transit—challenge the sovereignty and feasibility of national and cultural borders as they have been traditionally envisioned, inviting transgression as a tool of coexistence. Perhaps most interestingly, however, these works of fiction serve as a point of entry to examining the changing face of Europe. As Olivier Roy points out,

Muslims are no longer foreigners. But this integration was achieved neither through assimilation, as was often hoped by the host countries, nor through the making of a multicultural society, as it is often described (that is, the juxtaposition of different corporate cultures). It was achieved through the recasting of pristine identities into new variable sets of identity patterns, which evade any attempt to "substantialise" them. Identities are less a given fact than an individual choice, and can change over time in relation to social circumstances, and overlap with other identities. In the past twenty years the Western public and authorities realised that Islam had become a permanent feature of their societies, and this prompted a reassessment of European national identities, already shaken by the development of the European Union. (102)

Muslims are no longer "foreigners" in the greater European imaginary (though it must be stated that Islam has never been foreign when viewed through the lens of Spanish history).¹⁸ Muslim immigrants are, however, "recasting" idealized national identities into "variable patterns" that correspond to lived experience as opposed

to inherited national affiliations or expectations of assimilation. Maghrebi immigrants are remapping what it is to be “European” via their adaptability, mobility, and ability to layer their identities without obscuring either roots or routes. It is this layering of identities, this integration without assimilation, that points to intimate encounters and friendships with European nationals as both sites of friction and points of reconciliation.

CHAPTER 2

Romancing Europe

Postcolonial Foundational Fictions

Introduction

The association of intimacy with access and belonging to the nation is well established. It has long been posited that gender and sexuality form the basis of an individual's self-conception and sense of identity, as well as of his or her place within the sociopolitical landscape. Writers such as Hélène Cixous ("Le rire de la Méduse," 1975), Michel Foucault (*The History of Sexuality*, 1978), Judith Butler (*Gender Trouble*, 1990), and Gloria Anzaldúa (*Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza*, 1987), among many others, have proposed that how and why a subject claims and inhabits his or her body, and toward whom he or she directs his or her desire, impacts an individual's position in society and within the state at large. While societies and socioeconomic systems are constantly evolving, it remains true that "relations of sex gave rise, in every society, to a *deployment of alliance*: a system of marriage, a fixation and development of kinship ties, of transmission of names and possessions" (*History of Sexuality*, 106). Therefore, declaring sexual *preference*, defining what/who gives or does not give pleasure as a result of desire and not obligation, is a constitutive act that places the individual within (or without) a margin of acceptable practice that abides by or challenges an order. This statement of preference determines the individual's position not only within his society and

family but within the landscape of the nation as well; the nation asserts itself as a unified and *complete* (closed, impenetrable) entity, based as much on what it is as what it is not. As Benedict Anderson points out, “Communities are to be distinguished, not by their falsity/genuineness, but by the style in which they are imagined . . . The nation is imagined as *limited* because even the largest of them, encompassing perhaps a billion living human beings, has finite, if elastic boundaries, beyond which lie other nations. No nation imagines itself coterminous with mankind. The most messianic nationalists do not dream of a day when all the members of the human race will join their nation” (7). Certainly, a nation declares its wholeness by delineating boundaries that declare a space of “us” and a space of “otherness.” When there is an internal contingent of “other” within the boundaries of the national, there occurs a perceived imbalance of the construct of the purported “collective” self. Sexual behaviors or intimate partnerships that challenge the homogeneity of the nation must belie an “other” within. As a result, nations have long had a vested interest in guarding the pairings within their boundaries and among their national subjects.

This protectionism of marriage and sexual exchange was especially true in colonial contexts, in which the concept of ethnicity entered the discourse on personhood, nation, and citizenship. In different manifestations throughout the colonial world (encompassing the Americas, Africa, and Asia) the idea of *métissage*¹ emerged at different times as a phenomenon to be studied, a social reality, and a tool of nation-building. Doris Sommer’s classic work *Foundational Fictions* (1991) demonstrates this via the lens of the national “romances” of nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Latin America, though her book is relevant to contemporary Europe. National romances may be defined as novels whose protagonists (a heterosexual romantic couple) symbolize or are in some way representative of a racial and social ideal. It is through these unions that the nation imagines its own founding. In her

book, Sommer analyzes a wide body of works spanning Mexico, Ecuador, Uruguay, Colombia, Chile, Cuba, Brazil, Argentina, and Venezuela, whose protagonists are would-be couples. She chooses a number of “classic” period novels and argues that they represent *foundational* projects of nation formation. The state deploys and promotes its national and racial projects through the idealization of romantic relationships that form the “foundation” for national origins and identity.

The term “foundational” here posits a point of origin for the conception of the Latin American nation-state. Indeed, following the chaotic time of the wars of independence in Latin America (1808–29), the new nations sought to solidify themselves as united peoples by tackling the “problem” of mixed races, classes, and viewpoints on independence. This was done through many government undertakings but was perhaps most interestingly reflected in the literary works of the time, often written by statesmen, for whom romantic relationships were a useful allegorical vehicle for the nation.² The success or failure of the intimate relationship (success generally being defined as consummated, recognized marriage) not only is of great import to the state but is representative of the direction of the nation as a whole. The marital relationship that overcomes differences in class or race usually results in the “ironing out” of ethnic differences that favors a “whiter” postcolonial future. As the lovers in Sommer’s analysis “imagine their ideal relationship through an alternative society” (18), that society is presented as possible and attainable by adhering to the unifying principles of the new nation-state and becoming part of the national project.

Surely, intimacy and marriage in the colonial and postcolonial context of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were presented as solutions for internal discord, a way of keeping people *in*, and a means of solidifying the wholeness and integrity of the nation. The fruitful marital union especially is proposed as a kind of “solution” for the imminent *dissolution* of the emerging

nation-state. As Doris Sommer posits, “In these [Latin American] sentimental epics, one meaning doesn’t merely point to another, unreachably sublime, register; it *depends* on the other. The romantic affair *needs* the nation, and erotic frustrations *are* challenges to national development. By the same token, requited love already *is* the foundational moment in the dialectical romances” (50). The fruitful erotic union, as sanctioned by the state through matrimony, is an allegory of the nation itself. In this context, the *realized* and requited romance is not only constitutive to the nation; it is indispensable to it. This notion of sanctioned and sanctionable marriage for the sake of national unity is easily transposable to the European context, with its long history of internal marriage and royal intermarriage for political lineage. Yet, in the modern day framework of extensive immigration, the element of romance (real or imagined) is removed from the equation, and sex and marriage become something new: not foundational of the nation but simply ways *into* the nation. The allegorical paradigm presented in Sommer’s work is inverted, and the nation may now be challenged and reconfigured via sexual and intimate relationships.

Sex and marriage as vehicles of entry, citizenship, and belonging inevitably call attention to the immigrant experience as physically charged. Much more so than native-born citizens of a country, immigrants are aware of themselves as a *body*, a physical entity that must navigate delineated and proscribed spaces in order to access paid labor. The immigrant’s body traverses and is traversed; it becomes a currency by which to gain access to the host society. The migratory body is simultaneously seen and unseen and is often marked as the intersection of both desire and violence. As Chicana poet and theorist Gloria Anzaldúa writes about the US-Mexican border,

1,950 mile-long open wound
dividing a *pueblo*, a culture,
running down the length of my body,

staking fence rods in my flesh,
 splits me splits me
me raja me raja [it slices me] . . .
 This is my home
 this thin edge of
 barbwire. (*Borderlands/La Frontera*, 24, 25)

The flesh of the immigrant is inscribed, and in a sense the migrating subject inhabits a wounded space. The body is a crossing, a commodity, and a place of exchange whose value is often determined by those in a position to enforce the law. Tellingly, rape and prostitution are routinely encountered by immigrants working within an underground economic system and traversing borders without legal protection.³ Often, sexual assault is the price that immigrants (particularly women and minors) pay for “admission” to an economic promised land. This sexual violence at the border implies a violence within and encircling the markers of the state, thereby undermining the idealized production of the “national romance” and sanctioned intimacy as a means of social cohesion.

Interestingly, the migratory phenomenon of looming danger seems able to transcend and bend traditional sexual mores. Sex and marriage are, in the migratory sphere, understood to be tools of advancement and of legal recognition. Sexuality goes beyond pleasure for economic migrants as well as for citizens; it also holds tangible *value* and the possibility of financial survival. The need to arrive and settle in a host country elides judgment of whatever means it took to get there, even when these may strongly clash with the traditional values of the home country. This urgency means that “traditional” morality, behavior, and gender roles are thrown into chaos in the border sphere. For the immigrant, *crossing over* is a term that encompasses not only geography and space but also internal transformation and the transgressing of personal barriers, including those of sexuality. As Anzaldúa again illustrates,

Cuando vives en la frontera [when you live on the frontier]
 people walk through you, the wind steals your voice,
 you're a *burra*, *buey*, scapegoat,
 forerunner of a new race,
 half and half—both woman and man, and neither—
 a new gender . . .
 . . . To survive in the Borderlands
 You must live *sin fronteras* [without frontiers]
 Be a crossroads. (216–17)

The immigrant, then, is required to bend the purported fixity of “traditional” conceptualizations of male/female designations and become extremely adaptable, open, and boundless. The seeming dissolution of limits, both territorial and physical, present the transitive migrant body as a point of potential fracture for the unity of the nation-state, as it may *perform* as necessary while concealing its true nature. Certainly, Judith Butler’s views on gender and “performativity” suggest a connection between the body and the constitution of the nation:

[A]cts, gestures, enactments, generally construed, are *performative* in the sense that the essence or identity that they otherwise purport to express are fabrications manufactured and sustained through corporeal signs and other discursive means. That the gendered body is *performative* suggests that if the reality is fabricated as an interior essence, that very interiority is an effect and function of a decidedly public and social discourse, the public regulation of fantasy through the surface politics of the body, the *gender border control* [emphasis mine] that differentiates inner from outer, and so institutes the “integrity” of the subject. (134)

The term “performance” implies that the act has a targeted audience, and the performer may perform differently in different spaces. When read in the context of immigration and the circulation of services (licit and otherwise), the phrase “gender border control” employed by Butler takes on new meaning. While the migrant body is productive in terms of cheap labor, it is disruptive

with regards to perpetuating identity via the traditional means of “national” marriage. Not only is the body of the immigrant subject to trade and abuse, but it is also desired and “unknowable” or not to be trusted due to its *performative* capacity. Unlike so-called native bodies in the national space, immigrants cannot easily be tracked, controlled, or “inscribed” within an idealized national character. As such, their sexual relationships and marriages also go unregulated, thereby transforming the landscape of national identity.

The fact that the immigrant bodies may be “untraceable” does not imply that they are not in constant movement, interacting with and mingling with the bodies of European native nationals. As a result, relationships between immigrants and Europeans are intense and often violent but never static. As Ann Laura Stoler points out, intimacy (and whom it is shared with) has long been linked with intrinsic racial belonging in colonized contexts. In the colonial framework, who is desired sexually is viewed as particularly representative of what is at an individual’s *racial* “innermost” (9). Additionally marred by questions of culture, religion, and legal status, (post)colonial intimacies that do transgress racialized parameters then struggle to “consummate” themselves in the traditional sense posited by Sommer (marriage) and instead affirm themselves in ways and places outside of the institutions of the nation. Relationships or romantic encounters such as these often displace marriage and citizenship as the paradigm of nationality, instead proposing marriage and sex as deconstructions of the nation as it has been previously theorized. In this chapter, I will analyze the ways in which intimate relationships actually break apart the notion of “romance” in Europe in an era of massive exclusions and movements of persons. Through my reading of Manuel Valls’s *¿Dónde estás Ahmed? (Where Are You, Ahmed?)*, a book about teenage love between a Catalan girl and a Moroccan immigrant, I posit that the impossibility of fruitful interethnic romances is writing the nation out of its own narrative, as there

is no safe place within its borders for love to take root. In Tahar Ben Jelloun's complex novel *Partir*, which centers upon the young Azel's obsession with leaving Tangier for Spain, I explore the ways in which movement and *traslado* may require sexual transgressions and maneuvers that undermine the unified ideology of the nation-state. Finally, through the film *L'enfant endormi*, I delve into how "traditional" marital and sexual unions are challenged by the practicalities of migration, within both the host country and the country of departure, thereby showing how new, translocated romances are not constitutive of the nation but rather undermine its desired "wholeness."

¿Dónde estás, Ahmed? The (Dis)location of Romance

The evolution of national identity and the fissures in (im)possible romantic relationships are increasingly evident in novels and films emerging from Europe. Romantic encounters between immigrants and nationals of the host country are presented as alternately combative or conciliatory but always as difficult and transformative. Interestingly, it is within the realm of teen or young adult literature that these stories are often described. Books targeted at teenagers place schools, playgrounds, football (soccer) fields, and street cafés as the crucial sites of cultural encounter. It is at these hangouts that fights and furtive romantic encounters set the scene for the next generation's interracial and transnational reality. Teens less attached to or less adherent to the national "groundings" of their parents navigate sociocultural boundaries with less anxiety, greater boldness, and more aplomb. Yet romantic relationships between European national youth and immigrants often embroil the passions and violent disapproval of family, friends, and community. Writer Manuel Valls explores these themes of desire and *belonging* in his Spanish-language young adult novel, *¿Dónde estás, Ahmed? (Where Are You, Ahmed?)*, released in Spain in 2000.

Published as part of the “Espacio Abierto” (Open Space) literary series by the popular publishing house Anaya, the novel is included within the “Psychological and Social Problems” classification. Clearly meant both to create dialogue and to introduce young readers to the social preoccupations of the day, the story is set in modern-day Barcelona, a hotbed of North African immigration. The plot is centered on Claudia, a “model-esque” bourgeois teenager who is intrigued by and soon falls in love with her newly arrived Moroccan classmate, Ahmed. Claudia’s initial crush on the *moro* soon becomes complicated by her classmates’ scorn of Ahmed, whom they beat and frame for setting a fire on school grounds. When Ahmed goes on the run, Claudia finds herself at odds with her parents, her friends, and a Muslim immigrant culture that she does not understand, in an attempt to answer the question, “¿Dónde estás, Ahmed?”

Fittingly for a youth novel, the parameters of conflict are clear early on in the text: Claudia’s father is a staunchly traditional Spaniard, insistent on “normal” Spanish foods like rice, codfish, tapas, and cava over the “comida tercermundista” (third-world food) that he begrudgingly eats during a family outing at a Moroccan restaurant that turns out to be owned by Ahmed’s father (17). Claudia’s father angrily argues to his more understanding wife that “[c]ada día llegan más inmigrantes a este país, y cada día hay más paro. A este paso, los españoles nos quedaremos sin trabajo, y en cambio, todos los moros y negros acaban colocándose y estableciéndose aquí . . . Pues que se vayan a Francia o a Alemania, aquí ya tenemos bastantes problemas.” (34; each day more immigrants come to this country, and each day there’s more unemployment. At this rate, all the Spaniards will be out of a job and all the moors and blacks will have settled and established themselves here . . . Well let them go to France or Germany, we have enough problems here.) His discourse is clearly that of “us” versus “them,” with no possibility of assimilation. Interestingly, this rejection seems twofold and is aimed at both immigrants and “old” Europe at large. The father’s

statements reflect a resentment of Africans but also a mistrust of other European nations. In his mind, Spain remains isolated, a unique entity that can only be understood *by itself*.

Claudia's father's views would have had deep roots within his generation of Catalans. As Nouredine Affaya and Driss Guerraoui point out, "Los franquistas (sobre todo durante las primeras décadas) habían comenzado a presentar al marroquí como un 'fiel aliado', comprometido en una guerra entre 'creyentes cristianos y musulmanes contra republicanos ateos'. Franco había alistado una 'guardia mora' y prohibió las imágenes que deformaban a los marroquíes a los ojos de los españoles. Ahora bien, esas medidas sólo consiguieron consagrar las imágenes negativas del marroquí establecidas en los entornos de la oposición (socialistas, comunistas, y anarquistas), particularmente en las regiones catalana y vasca." (55; The Franquistas (especially during the first decades) had begun presenting the Moroccan as the "faithful ally," committed to a war between "Christian and Muslim believers and Republican atheists." Franco had enlisted a "Moorish Guard" and prohibited images that would deform the Moroccans in the eyes of the Spaniards. In truth, those measures only succeeded in solidifying the negative images of Moroccans established in the enclaves of the opposition (Socialists, Communists, and Anarchists), particularly in the Catalan and Basque regions.) Not only was Claudia's parents' generation defined by an imposed isolationism and wariness of Europe, but they were presented with Moroccans as both fighters and ideological symbols within a civil conflict. When it was Spaniard against Spaniard, Moroccans were viewed by the Franco opposition to be a part of the systematic invasion and oppression of private life and regional autonomy. While Claudia's father seems emblematic of an era, he is also, perhaps despite himself, aware of the cultural (r) evolution surrounding him. By suggesting that immigrants should go to France or Germany instead of Spain, he concedes that the wave of immigration in Barcelona is parallel to that seen in other European countries. Since the death of Franco in 1975, Spain

has become as desirable a destination for immigrants as any other Western European country. While the father desperately wishes that things would go back to “the way they were,” his choice of comparison belies an understanding that they will not.

Claudia, meanwhile, exists in a state of teenage *ennui* with her quotidian life and exhibits a keen curiosity for the unfamiliar. Early on, her enthusiasm for the cuisine that her father rejects on principle foreshadows how much Claudia will undermine her family’s mentality. Indeed, it is with glee and apprehension (and against her father’s wishes) that the young woman meets with Ahmed a few days later to retrieve the purse she left behind at his family’s restaurant. During this meeting, Claudia and Ahmed bond over a shared sense of generational isolation from their families and of feeling prejudged on appearances: Ahmed for being Moroccan and Claudia for being very physically attractive. After denouncing the fact that all guys seem to want “the same thing” from her, Claudia prods into Ahmed’s experience as an immigrant. She begins to comprehend the complexity of his predicament, as he explains his constant feeling of being neither here nor there:

—Ése es el problema. No lo sé. Tengo un lío enorme en la cabeza y en el corazón. Algunas veces, ni siquiera yo mismo sé lo que soy. Pero otras, tipos como los de clase se encargan de recordarme que soy musulmán. Me gustaría ser lo que soy, un musulmán de Marruecos, sin que ello me impida vivir en Europa como un verdadero europeo. No sé si me entiendes. Creo que me siento un europeo con raíces musulmanas o, dicho de otra manera, un musulmán tan europeo como los católicos o protestantes.

—Eso suena mejor.

—Sí, pero eso es un sueño, un sueño que no tarda en desvanecerse. Aquí sólo soy un inmigrante marroquí, y por lo visto siempre será así.
(46)

[—That is the problem. I don’t know. I have a big mess in my head and in my heart. Sometimes, I don’t even know who I am. But at other times, guys like those at school make sure to remind me that I’m a Muslim. I’d

like to be what I am, a Muslim from Morocco, without it impeding me living in Europe like a true European. I don't know if you understand me. I think that I feel like a European with Muslim roots, or put another way, a Muslim as European as the Catholics or the Protestants.

—That sounds better.

—Yes, but it's a dream, a dream that isn't taking long to vanish. Here I'm just a Moroccan immigrant, and it seems like it will always be that way.]

Their mutual disenchantment with the status quo and uncertainty about the future is a uniting factor for the young Claudia and Ahmed. Feeling rejected by his peers and teachers, as well as out of pace with his traditionalist Muslim family, Ahmed shares his feelings of being an outcast with Claudia. Ahmed's diasporic conflict is internalized as well as prompted by exterior forces, as he himself is not sure how to separate or integrate his *roots* in Morocco and Islam with his desired life *route* as a European.⁴

As Claudia's affections for Ahmed grow during the course of the novel, she too begins to share in the experience of isolation. It becomes clear that someone like her is not supposed to be associated with someone like Ahmed. Claudia's childhood friends and acquaintances make it clear to her that her relationship with Ahmed is a *detour* from where a "respectable" girl is supposed to tread. This is made evident following a taunting session at school that nearly comes to blows. Following a heated exchange, Claudia instinctively takes Ahmed by the hand to lead him away. This angers her classmates Víctor, Toni, and Alex, who then turn on Claudia:

—¿Habéis visto?—oí que decía Víctor—. El Cuerpazo practica el voluntariado social.

Debo confesar que ya sabía que algunos de aquellos mierdas me habían puesto el humillante apodo del Cuerpazo, pero fingí no haberlo oído.

—Seguramente pertenece a una de esas asociaciones de caridad que se ocupan de los jodidos inmigrantes—añadió Álex.

—¡Oye, Claudia!—gritó Toni—. Si tanto te gusta ayudar al prójimo, ¿por qué no te haces un favor a ti misma? Yo que tú no saldría a la calle con el moro ese. A la que te descuides, te robará lo que pueda. (64, 65)

[—Did you see?—I heard Victor say—. The Body is practicing social volunteerism.

I should confess that I knew that some of those little shits had given me the humiliating name of The Body, but I pretended not to hear it.

—She must belong to one of those charity associations that take care of the damn immigrants—added Alex.

Hey, Claudia!—yelled Toni—. If you like helping your fellow man so much, why don't you do yourself a favor? If I were you I wouldn't go out on the street with that Moor. As soon as you're not looking, he'll steal what he can from you.]

What may appear as simple schoolyard bullying is in fact much more nuanced. Not only is racism and prejudice evident in the schoolboys' reaction, but a sense of sexual ownership of Claudia as one of *their* women is obvious as well. It becomes evident that if Claudia is not “with” them, the Catalans—both ideologically and sexually—she is “against” them.

The passage displays a palpable resentment over Claudia's interest in Ahmed founded upon a race-based sexual jealousy.⁵ In the eyes of her peers, her actions represent an “injury” to the Spanish male ego, Spanish female chastity, and a soiling of Spanish national pride. This type of racial “narrative of injury” is intriguingly explained by Sara Ahmed:

So who is hated in such a narrative of injury? Clearly, hate is distributed across various figures . . . these figures come to embody the threat of loss: lost jobs, lost money, lost land. They signify the danger of impurity, or the mixing or taking of blood. They threaten to violate the pure bodies; such bodies can only be imagined as pure by the perpetual restaging of this fantasy of violation. Note the work that is being done through this metonymic slide: mixed-race couplings and immigration become readable as (like) forms of rape or molestation: an invasion of the body or the nation, represented . . . as the vulnerable and damaged bodies of the white woman and child . . . Within the narrative, hate cannot be found

in one figure, but works to create the very outline of different figures or objects of hate, a creation that crucially aligns the figures together and constitutes them as a “common” threat. Importantly, then, hate does not reside in a given subject or object. Hate is economic; it circulates between signifiers in relationships of difference and displacement. (118, 119)

Clearly it is the character of Ahmed who is signified as an object of hatred, but in her affection for him Claudia becomes a threatening *figure*—literally and ideologically—of hate as well. The pointed reference to Claudia’s physical attributes in conjunction with “social volunteerism” crudely imply that she is “giving herself away for free” sexually and thereby debasing herself as a *Spanish* woman by dating the *moro*. Particularly in a region as nationalistic and aware of itself as a distinct entity as Cataluña, Claudia’s alliance with Ahmed is seen as threatening and “out of order.” If, as Sarah Ahmed’s article posits, “hate is economic,” then Claudia “giving herself away” to the *moro* is in a sense robbing her homeland of its rightful body and “pure” future. Víctor, Toni, and Alex say as much when they warn Claudia that Ahmed will “rob what he can” from her when she’s “not looking.” As the young Ahmed’s potential partner, Claudia is placed in a position of looming loss: of her dignity, assets, and all sense of (womanly) belonging to the Spanish nation.⁶

This overt placing of Claudia’s sexed, desirable body at the center of the preservation of national ideology is not a new concept. The female body has long been (violently) placed at the foreground of battles for the perpetuation of “pristine” national identities, or conversely, to effectuate their destruction. In times of conflict, the female form has been a trope to reinforce or negate a unified national body, for it is the woman who literally and symbolically *births* the nation into being. As symbolic of a collective identity, Marnia Lazreg points out that “[w]omen often equal culture because they are the traditional keepers of the family and embody ‘cultural authenticity’” (225). This is particularly salient in Spain, where the Franco regime placed

the “ideal” woman at the center of its nationalist discourse, supporting politicized leagues of patriotic housewives known as the *Sección Femenina* (Women’s Section).⁷ These women’s groups, prevalent in urban spaces, upheld Isabel the Catholic, the Virgin Mary, and a variety of female Catholic martyrs as iconic of Spanish womanhood. As Linda McDowell points out, the figure of the woman is a common emblem for nationhood: “Women tend to appear on banknotes and coins either as symbols and allegories or as more realistic portraits. Among the symbols images of beauty and virtue, liberty, and justice and plenty are common ones. Femininity represents either culture or impartial justice—womanhood as above the mundane struggles engaged in by mortal men—or is associated with nature, fertility, and plenitude” (199). Claudia, constantly referred to as beautiful, is subsequently seen as a potential betrayer of nation and culture precisely because of her beauty and latent fertility. To her male classmates, her body becomes the symbolic gatekeeper of nationalistic purity and pride and cannot be “soiled” through intimacy with an outsider. Despite the oppression of Cataluña under Franco just thirty years earlier, it would appear that Claudia’s classmates have internalized and continue to perpetuate Franco’s safeguarding of Spanish femininity. Inverting the common paradigm of “liberal” European versus “repressive” Islamic treatments of women’s sexuality, in this instance it is the Muslim male Ahmed who sees Claudia as more than a sexed being and views her as an individual with free will. Ironically, Víctor, Toni, and Alex’s bid to push Claudia away from Ahmed only fuels her desire to become closer to him, thereby jeopardizing their national project.

Interestingly, however, it is not outside pressure from people like Claudia and Ahmed’s classmates that threatens their fragile union. Despite Claudia’s best efforts to understand Ahmed’s family and environment, the sense of being “out of order” and “out of place” seems to thwart her attempts at greater intimacy

with him. Ahmed seems, in a sense, to be “unknowable” to Claudia. Once Ahmed goes into hiding after being accused of arson, Claudia finds herself navigating Ahmed’s world in order to try to communicate with him. She is discouraged from her endeavor, first by family and friends who urge her to forget the *moro* and then by Ahmed’s loved ones. Claudia’s quest to find her boyfriend pushes her simultaneously closer to and farther from him, as she uncovers more facets of his life as foreign to her. When she ventures into an immigrant-heavy neighborhood and speaks to Ahmed’s friend and coworker Samir, he makes it a point to define her as an outsider:

—No insinúo nada. Pero es obvio que si Ahmed no se relacionara con gente como tú, no le pasaría nada de lo que le está pasando. Sus amigos, los de verdad, jamás le crearíamos estos problemas.

—O sea, que según tu punto de vista, él solamente tendría que relacionarse con los de su raza.

—Exacto; su mundo es éste. Y sus verdaderos amigos, sus hermanos, somos nosotros, y nosotros jamás le trataríamos mal ni le haríamos sentir culpable por ser musulmán.

—¡Pero eso es racismo!

—Qué sabrás tú de racismo.

—Quizás te sorprendería.

—Mira tía, hoy he trabajado casi doce horas, así que no me hagas perder más el tiempo. Y si de verdad eres amiga de Ahmed, hazle un favor y déjalo en paz. Él ya tiene sus amigos y no necesita nada de gente como tú. Además, no creo que tengas demasiados problemas para ligar; así que olvídate de Ahmed y búscate otro que sea de tu misma clase—dijo con una rabia que me resultaba incomprensible y apagó la colilla del cigarillo pisándola con gesto nervioso. (144)

[—I’m not insinuating anything. But it’s obvious that if Ahmed didn’t associate with people like you, none of this would be happening to him. His friends, his true friends, would never create those problems for him.

—So, in your view, he should only be around those of his same race.

—Exactly; this is his world. And [we] his true friends, his brothers, would never mistreat him or allow him to feel guilty for being a Muslim.

—But that's racism!

—What would you know of racism . . .

—It might surprise you.

—Look girl, I've worked almost twelve hours today, so don't make me waste any more time. And if you really are a friend of Ahmed's, do him a favor and leave him in peace. He already has his friends and doesn't need anything from people like you. Besides, I don't think you would have any trouble hooking up; so forget Ahmed and find someone of your same class—he said with a rage that seemed incomprehensible to me and put out the butt of his cigarette, stepping on it nervously.]

In this exchange, it is interesting to note how it is the immigrant that closes off access to a community of “us” as a response to a real or perceived exclusion. Just as perceptions and imaginings of the “Moor” or the immigrant tend to be totalizing and monolithic, here it is Samir who denies an “other,” Claudia, access to a world-within-her-world that is unknown to her. She begins to view her native city of Barcelona with new eyes; it is a place she simultaneously knows well and must seek to comprehend. Her encounters with Samir as well as with Ahmed's “traditional” sister Nadia,⁸ who informs her that as a woman she cannot interfere in her brother's affairs or accompany him to school, make Claudia begin to question the viability of loving Ahmed: “En cualquier caso, era obvio que entre su mundo y el mío había una enorme distancia, un abismo que tendríamos que superar si de verdad queríamos seguir viéndonos. Porque eso es lo que ambos queríamos. ¿O no?” (155; In any case, it was obvious that there was an enormous distance between his world and mine, an abyss that we would have to overcome if we wanted to keep seeing each other. Because that is what we both wanted, wasn't it?) The closer that Claudia gets to Ahmed, the less sure she is about herself or their relationship. The forces pulling Claudia and Ahmed apart always threaten to surpass their attraction to one another.

Ironically, Claudia's desire to “save” Ahmed and make their romance work immerses her in a similar kind of isolation and

exclusion as that experienced by Ahmed. She is crossing urban spaces at once familiar and alien and trying to enter cultural spaces seemingly cordoned off to those like her. In Claudia's case, her sex and voluptuousness again come into play, as Samir comments that she "shouldn't have any trouble hooking up" before dismissing her. Claudia's interest in Ahmed is assumed to be of a purely curious sexual nature, and again her "respectability" as a woman is put into question when she seeks him out. It would appear that both the Catalans and the Moroccans wish to police Claudia's body (away from Ahmed's) in order to maintain their respective internal orders.

The constant eyes upon Claudia and Ahmed render their romance continuously dislocated and without a *place*.⁹ Even when they manage to find each other, the star-crossed lovers are always looking for neutral ground on which to meet, away from the battleground of school or their respective family circles. It is no coincidence that the two consummate their relationship in an anonymous apartment building used as refuge by a number of immigrants (and in which Ahmed is hiding). As Claudia recounts, any intimacy or affection between them could only have occurred in the private, anonymous sphere: "El silencio y aquellas paredes pintadas de color salmón siempre perdurarán en mi memoria como los únicos testigos de aquellos momentos llenos de intensidad." (184; The silence and those salmon-colored walls will always remain in my memory as the only witnesses to those moments filled with intensity.) It is in this transitory place belonging to nobody that the young couple realizes their full physical expression. Nobody is aware of their location. On this occasion, they use the fact that they are out of time and out of place to carve out a (temporary) site that is their own.

Ahmed, however, dreams of a more lenient and fruitful place to take their story. Perceiving that their situation may be untenable, Ahmed hopes to dream up a way out his Spanish predicament: London. Ahmed fantasizes about leaving for London and

embracing its Anglo-Saxon pluralist model of integration, envisioning it as an opportunity to *be* and love freely:

—Por eso, lo mejor es que me largue a una ciudad donde haya muchos en la misma situación, una ciudad de extranjeros, de personas de diferentes razas, culturas, y religiones que pueden vivir sin esta maldita presión, sin que te miren como un bicho raro las veinticuatro horas del día.

—Ah ¿sí? ¿Y qué ciudad es esa?

—Londres. En Londres convive gente de todas las razas, nadie te discrimina por el color de la piel.

—¿Estás seguro?

—Completamente.

—Me costaba creer sus palabras, pensar que no estaba equivocado, pero no tenía argumentos para rebatir su punto de vista. Tal vez era cierto que Londres es una ciudad más tolerante, menos racista. Pero no podía imaginar que fuera algo así como el paraíso de los inmigrantes; el sentido común me decía que en todas partes cuecen habas. (182)

[—That's why the best thing is for me to go to a city where there are more people in the same situation, a city of foreigners, people of different races, cultures, and religions, without living under this damn pressure, without them looking at you like some strange thing twenty-four hours a day.

—Yes, and what city would that be?

—London. In London people of all races coexist, and nobody discriminates against you for the color of your skin.

—Are you sure?

—Completely.

—It was hard for me to believe his words, to think that he wasn't wrong, but I didn't have any rebuttals. Perhaps it was true that London is a more tolerant city, less racist. But I couldn't imagine that it was something like immigrant paradise; common sense told me that there's trouble everywhere.]

Disillusioned by his experience in Spain, Ahmed now dreams of another European country, one in which he can belong without rejecting (or being rejected for) his origins. Claudia's reaction is muted, as she smartly perceives Ahmed's idealized image of London to be naïve and colored by his current experience of dejection.

When Claudia and Ahmed's relationship is viewed through the lens of contemporary debates on nationhood, it is clear how the nineteenth and early twentieth century of the "foundational romance," or novels that depict the nation-state's idealized realization of the familial or romantic relationship, no longer compute in the context of a European immigrant reality. While in a "foundational romance" tale a woman is typically a symbolic or passive character, Claudia is an agent and driving force of the narrative. In addition, not only is a romance between a Spanish national and an immigrant made difficult by dueling family expectations, societal backlash, and legal limbo, but it would require abandoning Spain in order to survive and thrive.

To be fully realized, Claudia and Ahmed's romance would have to transcend the boundaries of nation and culture and become truly transnational, bypassing Spanish national identity entirely. Ahmed's "imagined community" of London is not the one imagined by Claudia at home in Barcelona. Claudia sees the possibility of cross-cultural reconciliation, whereas Ahmed does not. This puts into question the "romance" as a foundational tool of nation-building. Sommer writes of "national romances":

The unrequited passion of the love story produces a surplus of energy, just as Rousseau suggested it would, a surplus that can hope to overcome the political interference between the lovers. At the same time, the enormity of the social abuse, the unethical power of the obstacle, invests the love story with an almost sublime sense of transcendent purpose. As the story progresses, the pitch of sentiment rises along with the cry of commitment, so that the *din* makes it ever more difficult to distinguish between our erotic and political fantasies for an ideal ending . . . And every obstacle that the lovers encounter heightens more than their mutual desire to (be a) couple, more than our voyeuristic but keenly felt passion; it also heightens their/our love for the possible nation in which the affair could be consummated. (48)

While the affair in *¿Dónde estás, Ahmed?* was affirmed sexually within the boundaries of the nation, it was done so on the run,

in hiding, in a place of transit. If anything, the story implies that Spain is *not* the possible nation in which this love story can take root. The consummation of the relationship via marriage as proposed in Sommer's work is not viable. The young lovers' long-term prospects are dimmed by a legal system that is hunting the falsely accused Ahmed who, as a noncitizen, has little chance of proclaiming his innocence without being deported, as well as a web of family and community members who resolutely will not accept Claudia and Ahmed as a romantic couple. If the story of Claudia and Ahmed has a transcendent purpose, it might be to question the future of the closed nation rather than reinforce it.

Indeed, the end of the novel (and the assumed end of the love story) unfolds when Claudia and Ahmed leave the building in which they have presumably just made love. They are unexpectedly caught in a protest clash between proimmigrants' rights groups and skinheads, and they are surrounded by police who are beating people indiscriminately: "Los manifestantes se habían replegado formando una piña entre la policía, que avanzaba hacia ellos, y los exaltados, que no cesaban de lanzar piedras y cócteles Molotov, atrincherados detrás de los contenedores de basura que ardían formando una densa humareda. Por todas partes se oían gritos y ruidos de toda clase . . . Entonces llegaron más polis a las furgonetas arrastrando a otro cabeza rapada que se resistía a ser detenido. Detrás, a pocos metros, dos policías sujetaban a Ahmed, que sangraba por la cabeza . . . En aquel momento, yo no podía hacer nada para ayudarle." (187, 189; The protesters had spread out forming a barricade between the police, who launched toward them, and the agitated ones who couldn't stop throwing rocks and Molotov cocktails, entrenched behind the garbage cans that burned in a haze of smoke. Everywhere you heard screams and all kinds of noises . . . Then more police came dragging another skinhead resisting arrest. Behind, a few meters away, they held Ahmed,

who was bleeding from the head . . . At that moment, there was nothing I could do to help him.) Claudia and Ahmed are separated when Ahmed attacks a skinhead who is hitting Claudia from behind. She is ushered out by another young Spanish woman just in time to see Ahmed being taken away in the back of a police van. This racially charged *mêlée*, just on the heels of a romantic interlude, is the last that Claudia sees of Ahmed. Their moment of sexual intimacy becomes intertwined with a show of violence and, ultimately, separation. In the following weeks and months, Claudia quietly wonders if Ahmed has been detained, deported, or if he has attained his dream of reaching London. The novel ends with Claudia closing her eyes and imagining what Ahmed might be doing, while asking herself, *¿Dónde estás, Ahmed?*

The narrative concludes much like it began, with Claudia firmly anchored in Barcelona and wondering about Ahmed, who is tethered to no place. Theirs is a romance of (dis)locations, in which no place offers them the space to realize their relationship. In the end, the relationship goes back to the realm of the fantasy and the imagination, where love can exist independently of national alliances. Claudia and Ahmed are examples of how the “romance” is unable to become “national.” Yet, while the outside forces and internal conflicts do seem to have broken the would-be transnational couple apart, the implication remains that Claudia is changed forever. Perhaps it is she and others like her who will, in the future, (re)write the national/immigrant romance into one that is indeed fruitful and incorporated into the nation’s space.

***Traslado* and Transgressions of the Transitive Body**

The intertwined predicaments of affections, the body, and the nation vary by immigrant contexts. While in *¿Dónde estás, Ahmed?*, young romantic love is thwarted and dislocated by the

frontiers of the state, in Tahar Ben Jelloun's 2006 novel *Partir* (*Leaving*) it is through sex that the fractures within the state are to be found and exploited, while marriage is a tool by which to circumvent the boundaries of the nation. In *Partir*, sex and the marital union embody and surpass the frontiers of poverty and ethnicity rather than consolidate any notion of citizenship. In this novel, the "romance," national or otherwise, is not a component of any marital or sexual arrangements. Rather, it is the means by which the ideal of the *traslado* is realized.

Azel, a young, educated protagonist from Tangier who is obsessed with immigrating to Spain, finally does so with Miguel, the Spaniard who helps him following a brutal police attack and offers him a Spanish work visa. Acquiescing to Miguel's obvious expectations, Azel soon begins a sexual relationship with his employer so that he may remain in Spain, going so far as to convince Miguel to marry his sister KENZA so that she too might emigrate. In this manner, Azel, Miguel, and KENZA create a kind of transnational marital triangle in which the notions of national romance, hetero-normativity, and gender roles are put into question by economic need and the push to migrate. As Marjorie Garber points out, "prohibited amorous relationships . . . become invisible code violations if they have a 'happy ending' as marriage" (342). Unlike the "fecund" triangulation highlighted in Sommer's work, this triangulation does not culminate in a happy nuclear family. No longer is marriage the ideal stage upon which the state may play out its ideals of nationhood.

It must be noted that in the Maghreb, gendered spaces are carefully marked, delineated, and separated. Sexual differences and practices are shaped, molded, and illuminated by the cultural parameters of Islam and societal practices that separate the male/female and public/private spaces. Sexual practices are increasingly defined by oppositional relationships: religion versus secularism and "western" versus "eastern" political interests and designations of sexuality. Due to the stigma attached to,

and the inaccessibility of, premarital male/female sexual interaction, parallel same-sex encounters are often tolerated as long as they remain concealed and unseen. While homosexuality in the Islamic world is not the explicit focus of this chapter, it must be stated that the conception of “gay” and “queer” is very different in the Muslim context than it is perceived in a Eurocentric construction of homosexuality as an encompassing “identity.”¹⁰ According to Stephen O. Murray, “The hypothesized model of the trans-Islamic native domain is that ‘sexuality’ is distinguished not between ‘homosexual’ and ‘heterosexual’ but between taking pleasure and submitting to someone (being used for pleasure)” (41). Within this paradigm, homosexual genital acts are not necessarily seen as “making one” homosexual, whereas being perceived as *providing* or *enjoying giving* same-sex sexual acts is a loss of face and jeopardizes an individual’s “manhood.” While there are certainly exceptions, in the Muslim world masculinity has generally been “protected” and defined twofold: by who gets versus who gives pleasure and by the degree to which any illicit pleasure received outside of marital relations remains in the private realm. The sharp divisions that shape and inform the social and ethical paradigm do not stop at the front door but instead enter the intimacy of the bedroom. Public and private spaces become even more polarized as sexual practices adapt to and maneuver within the varying expectations of the public and domestic spheres. Even among those who share the same nationality, Kristéva’s assertion that “la différence sexuelle est corrélatrice des différences entre les instances discursives: que ‘l’autre’ est ‘l’autre sexe’” (326; sexual difference is correlative to differences between discursive instances: that the “other” is the “other sex.”), meaning that the “other” is always sexualized, applies. In this context, it may be said that the rejection of another individual as sexually dangerous, or punishing them for a social or political transgression in a sexualized manner, turns your conational into

an “other” and marks the simultaneous recognition and rejection of an aspect of one’s own sexualized self.

This self-rejection is devastatingly illustrated in a pivotal scene in *Partir*. While still in Morocco, Azel is stopped by local police, who plan to charge him as a drug mule to fulfill an arrest quota. In order to be freed, Azel claims he is being employed by the Spaniard Miguel, a known homosexual who spends part of the year in Tangier. Angry that he cannot be prosecuted as a mule (as working for Miguel offers some protection) they also realize that men who work for Miguel typically establish a sexual relationship with him and are often able to immigrate to Spain as a result. In a fit of barbaric retaliation, the corrupt cops take turns raping Azel:

Ils le pénétraient à tour de rôle en l’injuriant. Prends, *zamel*, donneur, petite frappe, t’as un joli cul, le cul d’un intellectuel c’est comme un gros livre ouvert, eh bien nous, on ne lit pas, on déchire, tiens, prends, salope, putain, oui, c’est comme ça que tu fais avec le Chrétien, il se met à plat ventre et tu le nourris, nous aussi on te nourrit et tu vas aimer, tu en redemanderas jusqu’à ce que ton cul devienne une passoire, une vraie gare, prends, espace d’intellectuel, tu pleures, tu pleures comme une fille tu pleures. (69)

[They took turns penetrating him and injuring him. Here, *zamel*,¹¹ giver, little street thug you have a pretty ass, the ass of an intellectual, it’s like a big open book, but we don’t read it, we tear it apart, here, take it, bitch, whore, yes, this is what you do with the Christian, he gets on his stomach and you give it to him, us too, we’re going to give it to you and you’re going to like it, you’ll ask for it again until your ass becomes a colander, a (train or bus) station, here, intellectual space, you cry, you cry like a girl.]

This disturbing passage is revealing on many levels. The fact that the rape occurs in Morocco, *before* Azel leaves, evokes the notion of Tangier itself as a border crossing, a lawless site of in-betweenness where the rules of neither Spain nor Morocco apply. It is there that the police officers, who are barely literate, see an opportunity to assert power and humiliation upon the college

graduate Azel, whose education they resent and mock as they assault him. They also ridicule him as a homosexual who consorts with Christians, feminize him (thereby attempting to masculinize their act) by saying he is “crying like a girl,” and, most interestingly, declare his body (his anus in particular) a *passage-way*, a train station. The porosity of borders, of belonging, and of sexuality itself is invoked by the rapists as they declare their victim’s body a *sieve*. This implies that the body of the immigrant is not only a place of encounter and circulation in the sense of a train or bus station but also a *common place* that may be entered or inhabited by anyone wishing to do so. There is a sense that in choosing to migrate, the immigrating subject may jeopardize sovereignty over his or her own body as a kind of price or trade for passage.

The threat of “other” enacted in the rape scene and the brutal “price” paid is particularly nuanced and doubly traumatic, as it is between those of shared nationality. As Moroccans, the police fully understand the added cultural taboo and shame that Azel would face should anyone in Tangier find out he was raped. Azel is violated not only on suspicion of some sexual “deviation” but because, unlike the police officers, he will be free to leave for Spain. The police have ensured that the nature of the crime will impose maximum humiliation upon its victim but allow the perpetrators to suffer no consequences. Following the attack, Miguel claims Azel’s nearly lifeless body and brings him home for healing. He is in Miguel’s care and in his debt and thereby in a position of complete submission. Having recovered physically if not emotionally from the rape, Azel is inevitably presented with the opportunity to follow the older Spaniard back to Spain for unspecified work. The sexual implications of moving in with Miguel are clear, yet Azel initially chooses to ignore them. Before leaving for Spain, Azel is in denial about what will be expected of him by Miguel when he arrives. When speaking to other men who hope to migrate, he finds that they

are much more pragmatic when it comes to the “services” that may be required:

—Si tu réussis à embobiner l’Espagnol, tu nous aideras? dit Abdelmalek.

—J’ai l’intention d’embobiner personne.

—Allez, tu couches avec lui, et ton affaire est réglée!

—Je ne supporte pas qu’un homme me touche.

—Tu verras quand tu y passeras, tu penseras qu’à ton visa.

—Parce que toi t’es capable de te mettre au lit avec un homme, de le caresser, l’embrasser comme si c’était une femme, bander, jouir et tout?

—Les hommes, c’est pas mon truc, mais quand t’es obligé, t’es obligé, tu fermes les yeux et tu penses à ta bien-aimée, c’est une question d’imagination, et puis pense à ce que cela te rapportera, c’est une question purement pratique.

—Mais c’est de la prostitution!

—Appelle ça comme tu veux, j’en connais beaucoup qui font ça l’été, y en a même qui ont réussi à partir dans les bagages du *zamel*. Une fois là-bas, ils fuguent avec une femme, se marient et obtiennent la nationalité, tu sais, le joli passeport bordeaux. Ensuite, ils reviennent au pays triomphants et arrogants. (63)

[—If you succeed at duping the Spaniard, will you help us? said Abdelmalek.

—I don’t have the intention of duping anyone.

—Go on, if you sleep with him, you’re taken care of!

—I can’t stand a man touching me.

—You’ll see that when you’re going through it, all you’ll be thinking about is your visa.

—Because you’re able to get in bed with a man, caress him, and kiss him as if he were a woman, get hard, and come and everything?

—Men aren’t my thing, but when you have to, you have to; you close your eyes and you think about your girlfriend; it’s a question of imagination, and then you think of where it will get you, it’s a purely practical question.

—But it’s prostitution!

—Call it whatever you want; I know many who do that over the summer, there are even a few who’ve succeeded in leaving in the bags of a *zamel*. Once they’re down there, they’ll run away with a woman, get

married and get their nationality, you know, the pretty mahogany passport. Then they come back to the country triumphant and arrogant.]

In this narrative, there is a sense that when it comes to migrating, sexuality is malleable and usable. Sexual “transgressions” are “forgivable,” as it is understood that one’s body may be a commodity to trade in order to attain the goal of settling in Europe. Just as the vision of Europe as a limitless land of opportunity evaporates under the harsh reality of getting there, so are pristine images of nationhood symbolized by shiny new passports marred by the “deviant” sex and questionable marital unions used to obtain them. Sexual trafficking is presented as an open secret, one that can later be glossed over by marrying and starting over somewhere new. Marriage is not presented as the basis upon which to “settle” and perhaps begin a family but as a means by which to seal off the past.

The notion that trading sex for the possibility of a new nationality may be “a question of imagination” is an intriguing play upon Benedict Anderson’s assertion in *Imagined Communities* that “communities are to be distinguished, not by their falsity/genuineness, but by the style in which they are imagined” (6). The idea that an immigrant is *imagining* him or herself in Europe while performing a sexual act to get there is in and of itself a challenge to the wholeness of nationality, as there are sexual loopholes to be exploited in order to reach the targeted nation-state. Immigrants are reimagining sexuality and marriage not as romantic or foundational but as pragmatic and transmutable commodities. They are questioning and subverting the unity of European national identities by accessing and by literally and figuratively penetrating through spaces that are hidden, forbidden, or not openly acknowledged. This represents a decentering of the nation from its “nuclear” family centers to its conceptual peripheries and borders. Marriage itself begins to function either as an erasure of a sexual history or as a sexless contract to cross

the border licitly. Intimate relationships become de facto passports and entryways in the circulation of immigration, allowing for sexual and gender *traslado* or translation and reinvention.

Indeed, the migrant experience appears to function, at least initially, by dismantling “traditional” gender roles and rapport between the sexes. Succeeding at immigrating is often understood to be a greater priority than observing cultural markers and customs. Particularly among younger people, the experience of immigration and the commitment to immigrate by whatever means necessary create the possibility of a new dialogue between the sexes, as they are both single migrants and breadwinners. Azel’s rapport with Siham, his former (female) lover from Morocco, who is employed in Spain as a caretaker for the special-needs Saudi child Widad, is illustrative of a shift. After making love, Azel confesses to her,

—Je suis devenu l’amant de Miguel.

Après un long silence, Siham, qui avait envie de pleurer, lui demanda s’il en éprouvait du plaisir.

—Je ne sais pas, quand je lui fais l’amour, je pense très fort à une femme, toi par exemple. Voilà, maintenant tu sais tout. Je suis nu devant toi. Et si un jour je me marie, ce sera avec toi parce que nous nous comprenons, nous nous parlons et puis je me suis toujours senti bien avec toi.

—Tu sais, je m’en doutais un peu, à vrai dire. Ne me parle plus de tout ça. L’important, c’est qu’on puisse se voir tous les deux, pour respirer, reprendre des forces, et bien faire notre travail. (105)

[—I’ve become Miguel’s lover.

After a long silence, Siham, who felt like crying, asked him if he derived any pleasure from it.

—I don’t know, when I make love to him, I think hard about a woman, you for example. There, now you know everything. I’m naked before you. And if one day I get married, I want it to be to you because we understand each other, we talk to each other, and I’ve always felt good around you.

—You know, I doubt it a little, to tell you the truth. But don’t talk to me anymore about all that. The important thing is that we can see each other, breathe, regain our strength, and do our jobs well.]

While the relationship between Siham and Azel has a strong sexual component and is not formalized by marriage, it is, by Azel's own admission, one of the more complex and intimate relationships in *Partir*. Azel's brief and interspersed encounters with Siham develop a friendship between a man and a woman that already manages to circumvent and subvert "traditional" and stratified male/female relationships among Moroccans. Their situation as immigrants means that they share not only Morocco as a point of reference but their experience in the crossing, of reinventing themselves in a new space. The characters focus on surviving in their situations and abide by a rule of mutual nonjudgment; any gender-specific expectations have been suspended.

In an additional twist, while chronicles of immigration often note the sexual toll that working in an underground economy takes on women and the sense of shame they often feel as a result, here, Siham works in a "legitimate" job as a caregiver and does not use her body for monetary gain. In an apparent reversal of gender roles, Azel does live by his body and seems to look to Siham for approval and absolution. In this manner, Siham and Azel eschew gender expectations and embody the *traslado* in the realm of interpersonal experience.

In order to cross national borders, the immigrant must often subject the body to labors and scrutiny that go against the tide of their personal morality, preferences, or sense of dignity. In *Partir*, Miguel asserts his ownership of Azel's physical being and destiny (given that Azel can remain in Spain freely only while under Miguel's dubious tutelage) as both a form of self-affirmation and a punishment for Azel's furtive encounters with women like Siham. In retaliation for the fact that Azel continues to seek women out sexually, Miguel seeks to feminize Azel and display him as his own personal erotic specimen, thereby not only invoking an Orientalist power play but also deauthorizing Azel's own heterosexual desires. This has a devastating effect on Azel in the long term, who again confesses to Siham, "J'aimerais tellement

être aussi lucide que toi . . . Les hommes, eux, doivent être forts, inébranlables, enfin, tous ces genres de clichés. Aujourd'hui, je me sens coupable, je suis au service d'un homme le jour, et la nuit je dois lui donner du plaisir. Je ne sais pas combien de temps je vais tenir. J'ai besoin de te voir plus souvent, j'ai si peur de finir par douter de ma sexualité." (106; I wish I were as clear as you . . . Men, they should be strong, unshakeable, all of those clichés. Today, I feel guilty, I'm at the service of a man during the day, and by night I pleasure him. I don't know how long I will hold on. I need to see you more often, I'm afraid of doubting my sexuality.) Here, Azel is dependent upon Siham for a sense of masculinity, as the repetitive sexual encounters with Miguel start to feel less fictional and more real. As Azel "performs" sexually with Miguel time and again, he appears to be getting lost in his sexual routine, while increasingly relying on Siham as an anchor to his manhood and desire. For Azel, the repetition of sexual acts with Miguel poses a continuing threat to his sense of self and a fear that his performance will "overtake" him. As the giver of pleasure rather than a recipient, Azel perceives that he has become submissive and will therefore "end up" gay or bisexual. Although Azel is sexually involved with both a man and a woman, he is fearful for the implications that this may have for his initial vision of his sexual identity as stable and fixed.¹²

Azel's fears and insecurities are squarely put on display at a party thrown by Miguel. Azel, who has yet to fully come to terms with the sexual relationship he maintains with Miguel in order to remain in Spain, is consequently subjected to humiliating displays of sexual exoticism at the hands of his "benefactor." During an elaborate evening *soirée*, Azel is dressed up like a woman and enthusiastically displayed as an *object* of desire:

Il [Miguel] saisit la main d'Azel et s'adressa à l'assistance:

—Mes amis, je suis heureux de vous présenter ma dernière conquête: un corps d'athlète sculpté dans le bronze, avec en supplément un chouia

de féminité. C'est un étalon rare; il a fait des études mais connaît aussi les bas-fonds de Tanger, la ville de tous les bandits et de tous les traîtres; Azel, bien sûr, n'est ni un bandit ni un traître, il est simplement un très bel objet, un objet de toutes les tentations. Voyez donc sa peau magnifique! Vous pourrez le toucher . . .

. . . Azel ne comprenait pas pourquoi Miguel cherchait tant à l'exhiber et à l'humilier. Il se dit un instant qu'il avait peut-être trop bu ou fumé du haschisch. (137)

[He [Miguel] took Azel's hand and addressed the guests:

—My friends, I am happy to introduce you to my latest conquest: the body of an athlete sculpted in bronze, complemented by a bit of femininity. He's a rare stallion; he has completed his studies but also knows the depths of Tangier, the city of all the bandits and all the traitors; Azel of course is neither a bandit nor a traitor, he is simply a beautiful object, an object of all temptations. Look at his magnificent skin! You can touch it . . .

. . . Azel couldn't comprehend why Miguel sought to exhibit and humiliate him in such a way. He told himself that perhaps he must have drunk too much or smoked too much hash.]

This scene is powerfully illustrative of how the immigrant, who is either constantly fighting the threat of anonymity and self-annihilation in a foreign land or seeking out invisibility in order to evade the authorities, is often subsumed into a state of personlessness. The immigrant subject is frequently reduced to a racialized *body*, a tool of work and pleasure. This scene is the realization of Martinican writer Aimé Césaire's claim in 1955's classic *Discours sur le colonialisme* (*Discourse on Colonialism*) that the legacy of the colonial system involves a process of *chosification*, whereby the "native" subject is distanced from his or her humanity and turned into a thing. Indeed, in this passage Azel is the "conquest," the "athlete sculpted in bronze," and the "beautiful object" of admiration but is not described as a human being with emotions and agency. It is evident that, no matter what Miguel's attachments are to Azel or how great his fascination with him may be, he will never see him as an equal.

In this passage, Azel fully incarnates the immigrant as an anonymous, nameless being who *performs* as need be in order to subsist. While Azel's drag performance may seem playful at first glance, it has much darker undertones. There is a violence implicit in Judith Butler's theories of performing gendered roles and expectations, one that Vicki Bell addresses:

There is no playful repetition here. Gender performance is regarded as a strategy of *survival*, formed within a heterosexual matrix which, while not compulsory, is hegemonic, such that the psychic structures it deploys are analogous to melancholia, in which the lost object is incorporated into the psychic life as part of the ego, an object of ambivalence, i.e. both loved and hated. Moreover, whenever a performance is situated on the "outside," in a non-hegemonic position, it is frequently named by the terms that incorporate it on the "inside." There may be times when such enunciations illuminate the "gap" between ideals and performances, but there is no necessary connection there. Most of the time, gender is performed, and (presumably) "read" or seen, because there is an issue of *survival* at stake. (140)

In *Partir*, what Bell has deemed the "heterosexual matrix" is twisted within a homoerotic context but still posits a curiously male/female power dynamic in a colonial/Orientalist throwback: Azel is feminized and dressed as a woman and dances like a belly dancer. While in a rather unorthodox situation, Azel finds himself typifying the Orient to his host's satisfaction in a very traditional way. Much like the Flaubert posited by Edward Said in *Orientalism*,¹³ the character Miguel here takes the "masculine" (read: white, Spanish, imperial) position and directs the dominant gaze at Azel, who has in this context become the dancing girl. Not only has Azel come to serve Miguel sexually, but he is well versed in Miguel's colonial "script"¹⁴ and has undertaken a very public gender performance of distinctive Orientalist character. Azel invokes and *re-presents* the imperial paradigms of the past in order to enter Spanish national territory and rewrite his own future on European soil. Yet, while Azel is forced into his

role vis-à-vis Miguel, he is also challenging Miguel's power in his overall intent to use him toward Spanish residency. Sex and marriage are thus given new iterations as commodities that can be used to buy a way into or out of the nation.

***L'Enfant Endormi*: Re-turning the Nation**

The traffic in and out of the nation and the effect it has on kinship ties and marriage are central themes in Belgian-Moroccan director Yasmine Kassari's 2004 film *L'enfant endormi* (*The Sleeping Child*), filmed in Arabic and subtitled in French. While most novels and films on immigration delve into the experiences of those who immigrate and take place in the "host" country, Kassari's film depicts the other side of immigration and the impact upon the people and places that are left behind. The film is set in an unnamed rural village situated in Morocco's Atlas Mountains, where the wind sweeps through swathes of dust that was once tilled land. The small community notably comprises mostly women, children, and the elderly due to the high proportion of men who have left for Europe to find work. The film focuses primarily on the female characters Zeinab and Halima, two young women of similar age. Halima is married, beautiful, vivacious, and the mother of a young girl named Siham as well as a younger boy who appears rarely in the film. The plot, however, centers on the docile newlywed Zeinab, who learns that she is pregnant shortly after her husband has clandestinely immigrated to Spain. She decides to "sleep the fetus" until after his return, invoking an old white magic tactic widespread in rural Morocco that is meant to keep a child "asleep" inside of its mother until it can be born at a more convenient time.

As the film delicately shows, the burden of immigration "on the home front" falls disproportionately upon women, who must raise families alone, carry on tradition, and remain financially solvent while relying solely upon one another. In the

struggle and loneliness faced by the women, as well the constant absence of the men in their lives, the film charts how the immigration intended to send back financial support to Morocco instead tears at the social and marital structures that organize the Moroccan nation. If *¿Dónde estás, Ahmed?* and *Partir* chronicle how intimacy and marriage can permeate or subvert the national order, then *L'enfant endormi* demonstrates how the complete *absence* of intimacy and the separation of family units frustrates the consolidation and preservation of nationhood in the country of origin.

Tellingly, the narrative of absence prevalent in *L'enfant endormi* starts with preparations for Zeinab's wedding. Unlike most films or novels, in which a wedding ties up the story or suggests a "happily ever after," here it sets up the framework of conflict that will ensue throughout the film. From the outset, marriage brings not stability but inertia and uncertainty. As is tradition, the bride sits with all the women and is tended to but must not move. Zeinab is visited by Halima's daughter Siham, who asks her, "Pourquoi tu ne peux pas bouger?" (Why can't you move?) to which Zeinab responds, "Parce que je suis la mariée" (Because I am the married one). From the outset it is implied that Zeinab's approaching marriage limits her movement and possibilities. Indeed, the marriage is being performed under unusual circumstances: the groom-to-be, Hassan, and Ahmed, who is married to Halima (Zeinab's best friend), are due to leave for Europe together the day after the ceremony. The matriarch, portrayed by the blind grandmother of Hassan who is often the one to "see" situations most clearly, questions the future of such a marriage out loud: "Quelle idée de se marier la veille avant son départ? Quelle vie aura cette pauvre fille? Juste le temps d'avoir mal! . . . Avant, on mariait nos enfants pour qu'ils s'en aillent. Aujourd'hui, on les marie pour s'assurer de leur retour." (What an idea to get married the eve before departure. What kind of a life will that poor girl have? Just enough of one to face hardship! . . . Before, we

married our children so that they would leave. Now, we marry them to ensure their return.) The grandmother of the groom voices her disapproval of the marriage to her own daughter, the dismissive mother-in-law-to-be. Devastated by her son's choice to emigrate, the groom's mother has pushed for the marriage to take place to guarantee that he will return. She shows little concern for the fact that, in so doing, she has placed the life of the young Zeinab into a state of perpetual pause. Rather than affirm a future life together, Zeinab's marriage makes her a placeholder for her husband's family, a kind of collateral asset to ensure his future return.

Despite the celebratory tone of the wedding, punctuated by lively dancing, music, and a feast, everyone seems aware of a dark undercurrent undermining the festivities. The *guérisseur* (faith healer) who must bless the bride before the consummation of the marriage is late, the sugar was forgotten in the mint tea (a bad omen), and the expression on the men's faces suggests an underlying tension. The simmering discord rises to the surface as the men of the village gather to sing before the wedding ceremony in one of the opening scenes. With the vast, empty openness of the Atlas Mountains in the background, the men sing of leaving at a time when two people's lives are to be purportedly united:

Je suis ici chez moi, et je m'en porte bien
 L'Espagne, il n'y a rien à en attendre . . .
 Je ne compte que sur mes bras,
 et parcourrai tous les continents . . .
 L'illettré réfléchis à deux fois.
 Même les langues te feront défaut . . .
 Et toi le lettré, ton diplôme pourri dans le placard,
 Et tu vis au gré de ses hasards . . .
Si tu veux vraiment émigrer,
divorce de ta belle, elle vivra mieux libérée.

[I'm at home here, and I do just fine
 There is nothing to expect in Spain
 I count only on my arms
 And covered all the continents . . .
 Think twice, illiterate
 Even languages will betray you
 And you the literate, with your diploma rotting in the
 cabinet,
 You live at the whim of chance
If you really want to emigrate,
Divorce your lady, for she will live better liberated.]

The last two lines of the chant are sung by Amziane, a rebellious and outspoken young man who has returned from Europe, feeling that struggling at home among his people is better than struggling abroad. He looks directly at Halima's husband Ahmed when he sings, prompting Ahmed to attack him. The lyrics suggest that the husband should "free" his wife rather than leave her behind, which Ahmed finds intolerable—he expects that his wife will await his return. The men in attendance soon break up the fight, but the framework of marital conflict and female compliance in the film is clear. The majority of the townsmen see few possibilities in their home villages, and most of the women of childbearing age will undergo the experience of a husband emigrating to Europe as a laborer without them. Amziane is the rare exception of a young man who chooses to stay in Morocco, who is able to comprehend the devastating effect of immigration upon the lives of the women left behind. As he points out from the beginning, the village has changed from a place of rooting to a site of departure and transit.

The morning after the wedding, the men strap on their backpacks and jump aboard a passing truck while the women—mothers, wives, daughters—watch them leave with tears in their eyes. They are soon shown going about their daily lives, cooking, cleaning, tilling the soil, gathering water, washing clothes in the

stream, and minding the children. Yet the women's other major task soon becomes evident: they are waiting. Zeinab's mother-in-law goes to the passing truck looking for mail each day, but none ever comes. The wives resort to white magic to see if their husbands have safely arrived, concluding that they have. The women gaze anxiously at the horizon each day, but the landscape remains mute. Several months after the departure of the husbands, there is no news for anyone but Zeinab. She begins vomiting and missing her periods; she is most certainly pregnant as a result of her wedding night. At her mother-in-law's urging, an uncertain Zeinab travels to the faith healer to put the fetus to sleep until Hassan's arrival. She is handed a talisman, a prayer, and a piece of paper that she cannot open, lest the child never awaken. The child is now *endormi*. The "sleeping" baby is now also waiting for the father who is "lost" in Europe, in a sense pausing the progression and birth of the Moroccan nation itself.¹⁵

Upon the women's return to the village, life goes on as it had previously. The mother-in-law sits against the wall staring at the sky, awaiting news from her son. At last, many months after the men's departure, a video of the men is delivered. All the women gather together in a small room in the home of the one person with access to a television and videocassette player. In this collective video, all the men are together in a kitchen relaying short updates and sending their regards to their families. The video has a public feel and lacks intimacy, as it will be viewed communally. Several of the men declare that they do not have their papers, that they have been unable to find steady jobs, that they may not be able to send money home, and that they are uncertain of when they will return. Despite their time away, they have not been able to contribute financially for their families. Yet the small contact achieved is enough to sustain most of the women emotionally, save for Halima. Her husband Ahmed, who so insisted that his leaving was necessary for the family and was upset at her

resistance, is the man who does not want to address the camera or speak to his wife. Halima is devastated by the rejection, as she does not know what this means for her future or that of her children. She, much like the other women in the room, is left staring at a blank television screen. Filled with questions they cannot ask and frustrations they cannot express, the women are stuck in a one-way conversation with their husbands, who determine when to communicate, how to do so, and what subjects to address. In between the communiqués there is simply a deafening silence, a cinematic effect used often and wisely by director Yasmine Kassari to reflect the status of the women.

The videos, the missing mail, and the “sleeping child” are all indicative of a curious dimension of time inhabited by the women left behind. Throughout the film, there is a pervasive sense of the distortion and stretching out of time and place. Few communications take place in the moment; they are usually mediated by other people, travel, or technology. Silence and lives on pause go hand in hand. The women wait for the men to return, wait for letters or videos (which themselves are created in one moment, must traverse time and space, and then be experienced by the recipient at a later date), wait for their periods in hopes that they are not pregnant, or wait for the “right time” to bear their children so that their husbands can be present. While the women of the village in the Atlas have not physically left for Spain, they too are undergoing the experience of immigration. As James Clifford points out in *Routes: Travel and Translation in the Late Twentieth Century*, being out of time is a part of the migratory trauma, in which “experiences of unsettlement, loss, and recurring terror produce discrepant temporalities—broken histories that trouble the linear, progressivist narratives of nation-states and global modernization” (263). If women are the keepers of tradition, then their “broken histories” due to emigration pose a threat to their families and to the unity of the Moroccan nation as a whole. While the men who have emigrated live in their present, travel, and do not await news

from their wives or mothers (for it is they who are in movement and are charged with opening and creating the communication), the women are anchored to the home space and live in either the past or the future: the times when the men have been or will be present.

The men will always have a “pristine,” unchanged “home” to go home to, whereas “home” is forever altered for the women who live in it daily. Women’s chronology becomes fragmented or circular. Repetition takes hold. For the men in Europe, however, time remains linear. They have the agency and the choice to leave or stay and experience time on their own schedule. It may be said that for migratory women and men, the experience of “place” and space is oppositional: women in a home inhabit a place, while (traveling) men inhabit a space. As Foucault posits,

The law of the “proper” rules the place: the elements taken into consideration are beside one another, each situated in its own “proper” and distinct location, a location it defines, a place is thus an instantaneous configuration of positions. *It implies an indication of stability* [emphasis mine] . . . A space exists when one takes into consideration vectors of direction, velocities, and time variables. Thus space is composed of intersections of mobile elements. It is in a sense actuated by the ensemble of movements deployed within it . . . in relation to place, space is like the word when it is spoken, that is, when it is caught in the ambiguity of an actualization, transformed into a term dependent upon many different conventions, situated as the act of a present (or of a time), and modified by the transformations caused by successive contexts. In contradistinction to the place, it has thus none of the univocity and stability of a “proper.” (“Of Other Spaces,” 117)

As markers of “home,” women are positioned aside the “proper” signification of place. They become the place itself, therefore embodying the “indication of stability.” Men, however, are an intersection of moving elements, “situated as the act of a present.” They are “modified” and moveable, whereas women, as indicators of “place,” are not privy to maneuvers in time and communication. For the women left behind, the passage of time is not determined

by the sunrise and sunset or their own passage through the day but rather by the presence or absence of the men who have left for Europe. The women are new migrants that never left “home,” but nevertheless inhabit a place and life that is unrecognizable to the one that they once knew.

The timelessness inhabited by women and the constant waiting does not, however, mean that they are completely without agency or awareness of the (few) sources of power available to them. Within their dependent framework, they build independent modes of survival. For example, Halima hides birth control pills, which she says “reassure” her. Zeinab conceals them for her in her home, though this poses a risk for her should they be discovered by her in-laws. The overpowering and despondent mother of Hassan wills herself to die rather than wait for her son any longer. She soon dies, leaving the elderly grandmother and young women to do the waiting in her stead. Lonely and rebellious, Halima decides to wait no more and has several furtive encounters with Amziane, for which she is savagely beaten by her in-laws. She claims that she has no regrets, a feeling that is reinforced after a new video arrives from Hassan. This one reveals that Halima’s husband Ahmed has left for parts unknown, while Hassan is still unemployed and with no plans to return. A still-bruised Halima comprehends that her marriage as she has known it is over. Ahmed is not coming back and has no intention of contacting or supporting his family.

Halima runs through the vast landscape screaming and crying out, mourning the loss of her family unit. She eventually comes to a stunning conclusion: she will neither spend her life waiting for Ahmed, nor will she run away with Amziane. Halima will ask for a divorce. When she tells Zeinab of her plans, Zeinab replies that her husband will never allow a divorce. Halima replies, “L’important, c’est de le demander” (The important thing is to ask for it). Halima knows that her divorce may never be granted, but she feels that the crucial thing is to *speak* and demand it.¹⁶ Notably, Halima is the only woman in the movie to ever raise her

voice and speak out of turn. She jokingly howls at the moon to express her sexual frustration one night while sitting outside with Zeinab, who tries to muffle her. She later pierces the night air with screams while being beaten by her in-laws and yells uncontrollably when she realizes that Ahmed is not coming back. In a movie punctuated by what is not said, Halima's role is to break the silence (to be heard), thereby entering new realms of expression that are otherwise closed to her. Halima's final statement is her choice to return to live with her parents, leaving her eldest child, the little girl named Siham, in Zeinab's care. She cannot support two children and prefers that Siham stay where there is a school so that she will not remain illiterate like her mother. While Halima finally has some measure of freedom at her hands, Siham is, in a sense, doubly orphaned: her father will likely never return from Europe and her mother has exiled herself in her village of origin.

The sudden turn of events prompts Zeinab to send a new video to her husband Hassan, finally admitting to him that she has been carrying an *enfant endormi* for over a year. She asks him to please return so that she can have the child. Along with the video, Zeinab wants to send a photograph of her to him as a keepsake. The hope, perhaps, is that she will have as much of a presence in Hassan's life as he does in hers. She ventures out into the nearest city with little Siham and the grandmother and has a picture taken. As Zeinab cannot read or write, the image of herself is her only mode of communication, of affirming that she still exists and is waiting at home.

Zeinab's initial excitement when she receives mail from her husband a few weeks later is replaced by chagrin when she understands Hassan's response. He has returned the photo and written a message on the back side. A hesitant, visibly pained Amziane reads the message to her: "Zeinab, reveille l'endormi, et ne remets plus jamais les pieds à Taourirt sans ma permission" (Zeinab, awaken the sleeping child, and never set foot in Taourirt again

without my permission). Looking downcast and embarrassed, Zeinab slowly picks up her letter and walks away from Amziane. It is at this moment that Zeinab comes to the realization that she will never have a family in the traditional sense. She will always be subject to Hassan's demands at a distance, though he seems to feel no real affection for her as an individual. As Omofolabo Ajayi-Soyinka points out, motherhood itself becomes a marker of continuity and immovability imposed upon African women by their conational men:

Confusion . . . besets African patriarchy within a postcolonial/postindependent context. They [men, fathers] define a nationalist identity in isolation, outside history, and in regard to others they want their nationalism to be relevant in the global context. Both become circumscribed in their concept of "tradition," specifically a tradition that remains fixed, unchanging, and frozen in some obscure time immemorial. The constructed passivity of the woman confers on her the "traditional" face of Africa. When she stays in that bubble of the past, she is revered and respected; she is *mother*. When she steps out of that confinement, dares to be dynamic, contemporary, and to operate in real time, she opens herself to ridicule and to charges of unpatriotic acts. (79, 80)

Indeed, Hassan has humiliated Zeinab for daring to "operate in real time" by going to Taourirt to initiate communication with him, rather than waiting to receive word from him. Not only does Hassan reject her advance, but he also returns her photograph (the product of a small step of independence and proof of her image and existence) and demands that she restart the time of her pregnancy. By awaking the *endormi* at his behest, Hassan is resetting Zeinab's biological clock to his demands, though he will not take physical responsibility for the resulting child. From Europe, Hassan is attempting to affirm his presence and authority in his village and over his wife by insisting that she bear their child and become entrenched in the role of mother, which would thereby uphold Moroccan "tradition" as he envisions it.

Zeinab, however, has other plans. Having seen what happened to Halima, Zeinab will not obey and have this child. She will refuse to be relegated to an icon of motherhood in order to affirm Hassan's will over the family. The scene quickly shifts over to the lone, small figure of Zeinab by a river. Silence permeates the shot, as the sun beats down upon the harsh landscape. We see Zeinab's worn hands opening up the paper and amulet for the sleeping child and placing it into the flowing stream. Wordlessly, she has nevertheless responded to Hassan's ultimatum. As Zeinab watches the paper float away and ostensibly her child-to-be with it, Siham runs to the riverbed and asks her for a piggyback ride home. She obliges, and they leave together. Zeinab is willing to honor Halima's request that she raise a child alone but not Hassan's mandate. This is significant, as Zeinab and Halima escape the oppression of their respective marriages by forming a chosen or "alternative" family with each other. Their emotional bond and alliance as friends and women, while not sexual, trumps any traditional biological or hetero-normative marital bonds they may hold through their nuclear families. When Halima leaves and Zeinab refuses to have her own child in order to raise Halima's daughter, the two women quietly undertake a massive overhaul of the established societal and patriarchal order. Their loyalty to each other circumvents the desires of the absent men, creates an all-female household, and reconfigures the prevailing notion of kinship as one that exists outside of the bonds of formalized relationships.¹⁷ The film ends here, with Zeinab accepting that Siham is her child to raise now and that they are on their own.

As Zeinab and Halima demonstrate in *L'enfant endormi*, immigration undermines intimacies not only within the European country of arrival but also in Morocco, the country of departure. While marriages are enacted and consummated within the boundaries of the Moroccan nation, they are no longer fruitful or productive. The possibility of engendering future generations is put in peril by absence, as "home" becomes an unstable place.

Indeed, the “traditional” family and social structures left behind are disintegrated and transformed as a result of immigration; the family cannot take *root* when its members have undertaken disparate *routes*. This re-rooting (re-routing) poses a problem for Doris Sommer’s definition of national romance:

The lack of personal antagonism or intimate arguments between lovers [is] . . . the stuff that sentimental romance is apparently made of. The only problems here seem external to the couple. That they can thwart the romance, fuels our desire to see it flourish. So it is not only desire that doubles itself on public and private here; it is also the public obstacle that deters (and goads) the erotic and national projects. Once the couple confronts the obstacle, desire is reinforced along with the need to overcome the obstacle and consolidate the nation. That promise of consolidation constitutes another level of desire and underscores the erotic goal, which is also a microcosmic expression of nationhood. (49)

None of the couples in *L'enfant endormi* will presumably ever “confront” or “overcome” the obstacle of absence in order to consolidate the nation. The married couples presented are separated by seas, cultures, and time. They will likely never be reunited. The overwhelming factor of economic need will continue to press even those who return to leave again, thereby consolidating only transience. The only “romance” possible, that between Halima and Amziane, would never be realized, as Halima will remain a married woman under Moroccan law. In addition, Halima has chosen to remain single rather than link her lot with any man again, as is also understood to be the case with Zeinab. The result is a complete frustration of sexual expression and marital intimacy in rural sites of departure. The ideal of the national romance gives way to a kind of emigration dystopia, in which remittances are few, absences are many, and marriages are in name only. If European nations are having an identity crisis due to the arrival of immigrants, then countries of origin are seeing an emptying of the nation’s youth and potential, as more and more citizens seek to (re)produce capital and identities abroad.

This dystopic view of nationhood is particularly evident when viewed through the lens of the expectations set upon womanhood. While women are carrying on with their daily lives, it is expected that they uphold “national” tradition, which in Morocco is intertwined with Islam, and maintain a static “home” in their husband’s absence. Yet, as the movie makes clear, men are not held to the same standard and often lead double lives (with second families) while abroad. While some male *immigrés* continue supporting and visiting their wives and families at home with the intention of eventual family reunification, others wind up simply disconnecting from their waiting families at home, absolving themselves of their responsibilities in Morocco. The women in these circumstances have no such options and are left in a state of constant waiting and marital limbo. Despite themselves, women in rural areas find that they are living transnational lives without ever having left their village. As Meena Sharify-Funk notes,

The “transnational” is a relatively recent historical reality for the Muslim world; for centuries Muslim identity has been defined by an aspiration toward the consolidation of the transcultural, transethnic, and transtribal religious community of Islam. In contrast, the “transnational” began its history with the establishment of secular nation-states—a project that can also be connected with efforts to “nationalize” Islam in relation to local geographic, ethnic, and linguistic experiences. The countermovement against the spread of transnational secularity manifested itself in the activism of transnational revivalism and a program to reestablish the preeminence of Islam by creating an “Islamic state.” (90)

Women such as Zeinab and Halima actually inhabit the battleground of the transnational, as it is they who must simultaneously adapt and remain grounded while their world transforms around them. While their men may recreate “home” and interpret Islam as they wish while abroad, it is the wives and mothers in Morocco who are charged with consolidating the “community of Islam” as eternal and unchanging. It would appear that the men who have migrated displace their sense of dislocated identity upon their

wives at home, demanding that they affirm the identities that they themselves are experiencing as in flux.

While immigration trends are challenging the concept of national “wholeness” and identity in Europe, the same may be said for the sites of departure. In Morocco, communities are thrown into disarray, marriages are fractured, children are orphaned, and economies become dependent due to the absence of (primarily) men who seek employment by going abroad. It is this looming paradox of presence/absence that dictates the lives of women who remain in Morocco and that prompts Zeinab to “sleep” her baby in hopes that her husband will return in time to see him or her born and help to raise the child. In the end, it is also what drives Zeinab to keep her baby from ever awakening—she feels unable or unwilling to take charge of the load that Hassan is placing on her from afar. If the nation is, as Anderson posits, “imagined” as a whole entity, or, as Sommer proposes, “consummated” by desirable national unions, migration and the subsequent creation of transnational communities may have the effect of creating barren nations of origin that must reimagine themselves not as sovereign nations but as extensions of immigrant diasporas. From the viewpoint of those who remain behind in the migratory dynamic, the result of immigration is often a destructuring of the familial and societal tenets that consolidate nationhood: marriage, family, and religion. The “national” gives way to the transnational, decentering the nation and turning even rural, isolated places into sites of encounter and dislocation.

Conclusion

The (dis)location of migrants, identities, and citizenship is a constitutive aspect of the movement of communities, particularly in the context of clandestine immigration. While the number of North African immigrants to European countries continues to increase, so too does the European Union’s urge to secure its borders and

preserve its distinct national identities. As Doris Sommer posits in *Foundational Fictions*, national identity has long been imagined as the realization of sanctioned, consummated, and productive marital and intimate unions that would serve to consolidate the state apparatus as a collective body. This was relevant to nineteenth-century Latin American nation formation. Her model presents an intriguing inverse parallel to twenty-first-century Europe as the continent tries to recreate itself not as merely as individual nations but as members of the European Union. In the complex paradigm of twenty-first-century Europe, the “romance” has eroded as an effective political or allegorical tool of national foundation.

The pragmatic realities of immigration are reinventing what sex and marriage mean with regards to accessing, belonging to, and consolidating the nation. Manuel Valls’s novel *¿Dónde estás Ahmed?* employs the doomed characters of Claudia and Ahmed to demonstrate how sex and love can undermine the authority of the nation as well as decenter the nation as the place of possibility. Ahmed leaves, while Claudia is left wondering and forever changed. In Tahar Ben Jelloun’s *Partir*, homosexual sex becomes a tool and a commodity by which to enter the nation, while marriage becomes a currency by which entrance to Europe may be purchased. The “traditional” and “romantic” ideals of nationhood are subverted by the practicalities of evading political and economic exclusion. Finally, in Yasmine Kassari’s film *L’enfant endormi*, it is Morocco, the nation of origin and of departure, that is transformed by immigration. As the men of the rural village leave for Europe, their absence and insistence upon the maintenance of unchanging tradition leads to the dissolution of the family unit and an indefinite pause in the formation of the next generation. As the women endlessly await the men and their remittances, the social structure crumbles and the next generation is put on hold. As the borders between “here and there” or “us and them” are continually questioned, the transnational begins to encroach upon the territory of the national.

This encroachment is being furthered by the success of immigrant-produced film, popular music, and arts. Works like these are quickly reappropriating aspects of history and tradition thought to belong only to “natives” of Europe and becoming increasingly appealing to wider audiences. If those left behind, like Halima and Zeinab, must find a way to reinvent tradition and nation in the absence of the men through whom they had been defined, then those who left are now attempting to *re-root* themselves in Europe by *re-routing* home and Islam.

CHAPTER 3

Europe via Spain

Media, Islam, and the Sounds of Immigrant Identity

Introduction

At a time when massive North African immigration is redrawing the European political map and blurring the definition(s) of national membership, various forms of visual and audio modes of communication are mediating and diffusing new transnational identities. This latest cultural *traslado* is being undertaken via music and film. Circulating forms of multilingual and intranational media are challenging or erasing boundaries of nationhood and cultural belonging, creating a new cultural topography of immigration. Voices and artistic genres that had previously been relegated to secondary status are now claiming a primary or “mainstream” position in the Spanish and European cultural milieu and inverting the top-down construction and valuation of culture. Increasingly, it is through forms of media and pop culture that a sense of place is determined and dividing boundaries are erased or redrawn. Film and music are able to travel and transpose themselves in circulatory patterns that mimic the circuit of the immigrant subject and are therefore able to reconcile the tension between the “home” left behind and the “home” being created in Europe. The site of performance or viewership becomes, at least momentarily, the site of “the local.” As Dwight Conquergood points out,

According to Michel de Certeau, “what the map cuts up, the story cuts across” (1984: 129).¹ This pithy phrase evokes a postcolonial world criss-crossed by transnational narratives, diaspora affiliations, and, especially, the movement and multiple migrations of people, sometimes voluntary, but often economically propelled and potentially coerced. In order to keep pace with such a world, we now think of “place” as a heavily trafficked intersection, a port of call and exchange, instead of a circumscribed territory. A boundary is more like a membrane than a wall. In current cultural theory, “location” is imagined as an itinerary instead of a fixed point. Our understanding of “local context” expands to encompass the historical, dynamic, often traumatic movements of people, ideas, images, commodities, and capital. It is no longer easy to sort out the local from the global: transnational circulations of images get reworked on the ground and redeployed for local, tactical struggles. And global flows simultaneously are encumbered and energized by these local makeovers. We now are keenly aware that the “local” is a leaky, contingent construction, and that global forces are taken up, struggled over, and refracted for site-specific purposes. (369)

Immigrants cross through the jagged spaces on the global map, bringing with them narratives and rewriting stories shaped by this journey. Because so much of habitation and experience today takes place within the context of movement and travel, the “local” has increasingly become a place that is reflective of the contours of the world at large. The “refractions” taking place are best illustrated among immigrant communities who have chosen to speak and create from a place that does not exist on an official map, because it is one that is imagined, recreated, and circulated daily. This movement and dissemination is facilitated and reinforced by the arts, most specifically through music and sound. Sound and harmony can traverse spaces the body cannot and may be commoditized and sent across borders. Sound and image have become a path to communication, identification, and belonging among those who exist at or outside the borders of citizenship.

Artistic production that specifically speaks to and is aimed at a European or transnational audience has emerged as a dynamic means of enunciation and affirmation of identity, particularly

among Muslim immigrants who have found it possible to foment a musical *umma* (community of Muslim believers) that crosses barriers of culture and citizenship. For disparate communities bound by faith and/or a shared experience of displacement, music and media provide an opportunity to articulate an identity that is not bound by citizenship or national space. On rough urban streets often subdivided among ethnic areas, musical production becomes a means by which to affirm existence, subvert authority, fuse cultures, and affirm pluralistic identities. If the body can be restrained, it is much more difficult to silence sound. Immigrants moving to Spain and elsewhere have thereby adopted sound and media as both narrative and counternarrative, creating a new oral/aural culture based on a dimension of space and habitation bound by cultural affiliation rather than assigned identity.

This chapter will explore how predominantly Muslim immigrants across Europe are using music and media as a means by which to rearticulate and insert themselves in the dialogue on European identity and belonging. Interestingly, this is often being done by revisiting Spanish history, as the legacy of Islam in Spain becomes an axis by which to claim Islam as a Western religion, thereby legitimizing and “Europeanizing” its practice among immigrants. This is evidenced by films such as Antoni Verdaguer’s Barcelona-based *Raval, Raval* (2006) and hip-hop artists such as the Franco-Congolese Abd Al-Malik, the Franco-Moroccan duo La Caution, and the Palestinian hip-hop group DAM, whose combined artistic output retraces the parameters of “Europeanness” through the musical, Islamic, and Arab legacies of Spain. By first proclaiming Spain as inherently European and then invoking its Muslim heritage, immigrants have set about affirming Spain (and by extension Islam) as European, while allowing Muslim immigrant artists to claim a European identity re-routed through Spain.

Mapping Music: The Raval Bridges Europe

Raval, Raval, a 2006 film directed by Antoni Verdaguer with support from the Institut Català de les Indústries Culturals (The Catalan Institute for Cultural Industries), Televisió de Catalunya, and Televisión Española, dramatizes the urban space as a location of conflict as well as immense collaborative possibility. The protagonist of the film is the city of Barcelona itself, in particular the section known as the Raval. The city's Mediterranean geographical location, its autonomous regional status, Catalunya's historical position as situated both within and outside of the Spanish national paradigm, as well as the shared border with France, make Barcelona a particularly fertile site in which to create and showcase intercultural and transnational arts.

The Raval is in the *Ciutat Vella* (Old City) district of Barcelona, commonly called the *Barri Chino*, or Chinatown. Its name comes from the Arabic word *Rabad*, which is a designation for the quarters occupied by traditionally marginalized groups, such as the poor, prostitutes, or the sick. It is a place where the working underclass resides and where those with means go to fulfill their vices. As Elizabeth Ezra and Terry Rowden explain,

For the contemporary migrant the first action when stepping into a new place is no longer to try to get his or her bearings, but to go to work. Place has not given way to placelessness, but to the omni-placelessness and cultural disorientation that we have termed the *transplantation*. By this we mean one of the sites where the actual grunt work of difference and inequality takes place by enabling the production of the things that make leisure and privilege possible for people who would not (or would only) be caught dead in those places. In other words, these are the kinds of places that citizens in good standing and in pursuit of good health or good times visit but leave, places where dirty and not-so-pretty things . . . are left behind and then cleaned up by "the people you do not see." One does not see these people because the very fact that they have been relegated to such places is indicative of their lack of good standing, of the fact that they are not "connected." (212)

The Raval is not only a place where labor is undertaken; it is also the location where the workforce resides. It may be indeed viewed as a place of transplantation, where the work done by those categorized as invisible facilitates the lifestyle of the “citizens in good standing.” The Raval, however, is connected far beyond being a site of furtive arrivals and departures for illegal immigrants or for people from the center of the city seeking hash, drink, and brothels. It is the Raval’s cultural hyperconnectivity that allows it to move beyond being a site of procurement or transplantation (which implies moving something from one place to another unchanged), into a place of *traslado*.

What makes the Raval intriguing is that it is connected to “the establishment” even if its inhabitants are not. Geographically, it borders the port within an ancient trading city and is therefore both an economic powerhouse and a longstanding gateway for immigration. The Raval is a juncture where people and traditions are routinely juxtaposed, transformed, and created anew. In this context, the film *Raval, Raval* seeks to demonstrate that sites that may not be connected in terms of political clout are often the most globally connected with regards to population diversity and cultural production. As a site in flux and in contact with Europe and the world at large, the Raval may be viewed as a microcosm of Spain and of Europe as a whole.

Narratively and aesthetically, *Raval, Raval* does not highlight the Raval as a microcosm of Europe by proceeding with linear storytelling or a singular plotline. Instead, the film concentrates on depicting the city of Barcelona as a distinct *soundscape*.² The film is accompanied by a unique compilation score of popular fusion group songs as well as source music commissioned specifically for the film, including several songs featuring lyrics written by the director/writer himself. As such, these latter contributions are treated as components of the film script. The jacket of the film’s DVD release describes the movie as “un film coral” (a choral film). This not only references the film’s preoccupation with

audio composition but also alludes to different voices speaking in unison. The Raval is presented as a “crossing-space” of difference that nevertheless articulates itself similarly to a voice chorus. The choice of music as the *content* rather than the context of the movie is powerful given the impact of sound upon an audience. As Robynn J. Stilwell proposes, “Sight is a means of exerting control; what we look at is an active choice. This is an illusion in film, as we are being guided to see what the author(s) of the film text wish us to see . . . Sound, on the other hand, forces a surrender of control; we cannot turn away. Closing our eyes only serves to intensify our experience of the sound because of lack of interference from visual input; putting our hands over our ears rarely shuts out the sound completely” (171). Sound, therefore, is a means by which to effectively (re)present realities that the characters cannot avoid in a way that the viewer cannot ignore, either. On the rough streets of the Raval, musical production becomes a means by which to affirm existence, subvert authority, fuse cultures, and affirm pluralistic identities. *Raval, Raval* seizes upon the distinct cultural qualities of the Raval district and uses film as a medium by which to create a moving portrait of the Catalans, Castilian Spaniards, Moroccans, Pakistanis, Latin Americans, and Indonesians, among others, who now inhabit the area. The film’s usage of a variety of languages, among them Catalan, Arabic, Urdu, Portuguese, and Spanish, adds to the mellifluous sonority of the film. While *Raval, Raval* may initially seem a setting for the modern-day Babel, the movie employs music as a means by which to both exalt and neutralize difference.

The characters that facilitate the musical *mélange* reflect the transnational interconnectivity of the Raval’s inhabitants. They include a group of three Moroccan immigrant young men, the most prominent of whom is twentysomething Ali. He has a younger sister, Nadia, and lives with his mother, Chaharazad. Ali’s mother is married to Aurelio, a kindly older Spanish man

whose adult children reject both him and his new (Muslim) Moroccan family. Lucía is a vibrant, smart university student who sets out to help her more traditionally minded friend Alberto shoot a film on the Raval required for his journalism major. She and Alberto clash over their visions of what the quarter should be, as Lucía staunchly opposes the gentrification of the area. The young woman soon gains an interest in chronicling what she views as the injustices visited upon the neighborhood and becomes involved with Ali, originally meant to be a subject of Alberto's fledgling documentary. Javed is a young Pakistani boy who lives in political exile with his father, who runs a calling booth and market. Other prominent characters include an older Catalan couple who are long-term residents of the Raval; Guioimar and Raquel, two lesbians who work as mimes in the Ramblas; Vanessa, an abused Spanish wife who prostitutes herself to support her daughters; and Mario, an older, gay ex-cabaret dancer who must come to terms with the end of his performing days as well as being forcibly relocated. Certainly, demolition and reconstruction are a constant undercurrent to the Raval's urban tale, as the threat of eviction in favor of luxury hotels looms over all the area's inhabitants irrespective of ethnicity. Interestingly, the "native" Spaniards and the immigrant residents of the Raval are depicted as living parallel experiences of displacement. The onslaught of gentrification and economic instability are similar threats to them, despite differences in citizenship status.

It is within this context of juxtaposed destruction and creation that the story of music and revival in the Raval is told. For the purposes of this analysis, I will bypass a chronological examination of the film, instead analyzing *Raval*, *Raval* as a series of musical "moments" that create a sensory montage of transethnic life in Barcelona. Notably, the film begins and ends with a concert, while nearly every scene is punctuated by the ebullient soundtrack. The musical focus is evident in the film's opening sequence, which shows several young men in a band

practicing a song in a run-down apartment. One of them, a hippie Spaniard, begins singing. His ululations sound forced, and he stops abruptly. Tearing at his music in frustration, he tells his fellow band members, “No puedo, ¡no puedo cantar como él. ¡Y encima en Wolof!” (I can’t, I can’t sing like him. And on top of it, in Wolof!)³ It is soon evident that he is referring to their missing Senegalese lead singer, who has been deported by Spanish authorities. In the opening scene with the young band, it is made clear that the Senegalese singer is irreplaceable, and his absence results in an uncomfortable silence. While the expelled lead singer may not be favorably “connected” to the state apparatus monitoring immigration, he is nevertheless a part of the fabric of the Raval and thereby of Spain itself. Within the first few minutes of the film, the centrality and prevalence of intercultural music in the neighborhood is established, as are the ongoing problems with the regulation of immigration and citizenship.

The soundtrack of the movie is also central to the dialogue on community and exclusion undertaken by the film. Scenes that depict the greatest conflict between class, faith, and race are underscored by the insistence of music as a discursive backdrop, and the artists appear carefully chosen for their musical genre as well as for their lyrical content and social views. The gritty aesthetics (quick-moving shots, unsteady camera holds) and narrative loops of the film are held together by performances that fill the gap between scene transitions or that take over the panorama altogether and drown out the dialogue. In sequences when immigrant characters are walking through the streets seeking jobs, the music of Franco-Spanish artist Manu Chao⁴ is frequently used in the background. This is a loaded artistic choice, as Manu Chao was raised in France to Spanish parents who had moved to Paris to flee the Franco dictatorship. As an individual as well as an artist, he personifies and retells an exclusionary history that affected the region of Cataluña in a particularly brutal

way. The result is an audio code of historical overtones that relates a backstory for those who are familiar with or willing to seek it out.

Manu Chao's layered storytelling is reiterated in the usage of his song "Rumba de Barcelona" in scenes depicting migrant workers. The Rambla is a central commercial street in Barcelona popular with locals and visitors alike. As it is actually a number of interconnected smaller streets with individual names, it is generally called by the plural name of Las Ramblas. Manu Chao's song consistently references Barcelona's urban space, alluding to the constant movement of immigrants trying to make a living around the tourist circuit of Las Ramblas, a location where identities and nationalities are blurred and commoditized. He does so while pointedly playing a Cuban rumba, a Caribbean beat that is not "native" to the Mediterranean city. The usage of "Rumba de Barcelona" is also self-referential, as Manu Chao is depicted in the film as a street performer on Las Ramblas. Manu Chao strums his guitar in the busy city as if oblivious to his location, thereby indicating that it is the music itself and not his geographical location that determines his sense of place.

The urban landscape as the site of the crossing of cultures and intimate coexistence is reinforced when Ali and Lucía begin to date. When the two kiss on the street for the first time, they do so to Manu Chao's irreverent "Me gustas tú" (I Like You), a playful song that describes the euphoria of new love while weaving between languages. French and Spanish flirt seamlessly on the track as Ali and Lucía edge closer to one another. The seemingly unlikely couple leans against a wall and kisses passionately; the wall behind them is papered in posters and flyers for upcoming fusion music concerts. In this scene, music is proposed as a vehicle that breaks tensions and serves as the literal and artistic backdrop to relationships in the Raval.

The artist as the voice or *griot* (poet or wandering musician in the African tradition) of the urban landscape in *Raval*, *Raval* is

further reiterated through the inclusion of several performances by the Barcelona-based fusion band Ojos de Brujo (The Eyes of the Wizard). In one notable instance, a number of residents of the Raval have gathered in a bar to recount the events of the day after a round of evictions and reported police brutality have swept through the neighborhood. The lament of the locals continues as the background music becomes increasingly more prominent. Suddenly the camera's focus shifts completely from the characters and the dialogue to the hypnotic figure of Marina Abad, the lead singer of Ojos de Brujo. She is singing the gypsy-sounding song "Naíta," a rebellious song denouncing societal inequality. The voluptuousness of the music, which blends flamenco, hip-hop, rumba, electronica, and bhangra⁵ absorbs the viewer. Lead vocalist Marina concludes the song with an abrupt stop to the drums and a raised fist. The camera zooms in on her clenched fist, as her music becomes a rallying cry for the dispossessed of the Raval.

As the film progresses, it is Javed, the quietest and youngest recurring character, who becomes the unwitting catalyst for the major series of events in the film. Under his Catalan neighbor's tutelage, Javed begins to memorize the literature of renowned Catalan poet Miquel Martí i Pol,⁶ and becomes a voracious reader. He hopes to learn Catalan poetry and perform it for the Diada de Sant Jordi⁷ celebration at school, thereby fitting in with the other children. One afternoon he is walking home in front of the Museu d' Arte Contemporani (Museum of Contemporary Art, known as the MACBA) with his nose buried in his poetry book. A Spanish teenager on a skateboard carelessly runs into Javed and knocks him to the ground, injuring the boy's leg. The teenager is enraged that his skateboarding session has been interrupted by an immigrant child. He sets about destroying the book the boy was carrying, while the injured child looks on helplessly. The musical backdrop to the aggression against Javed is an impromptu open-air concert of Pakistani *ghazal* music taking place in front of the

MACBA.⁸ The concert is being attended by residents of the area, among them Catalans, Arabs, and a number of women in *hijabs*, a nod to the strong Muslim presence in the area. The character of Ali, who has until this point been portrayed as directionless and in and out of petty crime, stands up for the young boy despite his friend's advice. After a tense showdown, the offending Spanish teenager leaves, hissing, "Te juro que te acordarás de esto" (I swear you'll remember this). Javed is thankful but frightened, believing that he has gotten Ali into trouble. Ali tells him that the teenager's threats were "just words" and reassures him that nothing will come of it.

The power of words and silence asserts itself weeks later, when the real-life terrorist attacks of March 11, 2004, are featured in the film. Following the bombing of commuter trains in Madrid by Islamic extremists, the city of Barcelona congregates to denounce the violence and show solidarity. Lucía and Ali meet up at the demonstration, accompanied by most of the film's recurring characters. Documentary footage is here interspersed with film footage, as signs and banners condemning terrorism weave their way across the scene. This is the only instance in which film-recorded phenomena other than music are given precedence. As the musical score fades away, the shot instead privileges the sounds of feet marching, bodies breathing, people murmuring, snippets of conversation, and news commentary as a means by which to transmit the vertigo of the moment. Rather than impose any genre of music in a particular language over the scene of trauma, director Antoni Verdaguer again lets the city speak for itself, this time through its chosen silences.

Following the demonstration, the respectful pause is broken as Lucía and Ali walk home. They are again in front of the MACBA when the previous altercation involving Javed comes back to haunt Ali. The same group of skateboarders is circulating around the MACBA, and they immediately taunt Ali with "Oye, morito" (Listen here, little moro). Ali is referred to in the

diminutive and pejoratively called a *moro*. Past and recent Iberian histories collide, and the teenagers are quickly emboldened by the public anger following the Madrid bombings. The same teenager who was previously in a confrontation with Ali over assaulting Javed hurriedly stabs Ali in the back, whispering in his ear, “Nadie se ríe de mí” (Nobody laughs at me). Lucía is left cradling Ali and screaming for help as the sound of sirens engulfs the viewer. International terrorism imposed upon Spain has given way to street violence in its urban spaces.

Rather than unleashing a cycle of violence in the community, the stabbing of Ali sets loose a chain reaction of renewed musical expression. While Ali remains in the hospital with an uncertain prognosis, the merchants of the Raval sponsor a *Fiesta para la Paz* (Concert for Peace). In front of a packed audience, little Javed, Ali’s sister Nadia, and a chorus of children sing lyrics of reconciliation created by scriptwriter Antoni Verdaguer specifically for inclusion in the film.⁹ The song functions as part of the film dialogue, as it is sung by the characters, and contributes to the film’s message. The children first dedicate the song, titled “Raval plural,” to Ali and then begin a multilingual expression of solidarity:

(sung in Urdu)

Hagamos un esfuerzo juntos / Let us all make an effort
 Para entendernos por la paz / To understand each other for
 peace
 Por encima de las xenofobias / Above the xenophobia
 De las creencias o el color / Of belief and color

(sung in Catalan)

El Raval es muy central / The Raval is very central
 El Raval pentagonal / The pentagonal Raval
 El Raval es material / The Raval is material
 El Raval es cardinal / The Raval is cardinal
 El Raval es muy plural / The Raval is very plural
 El Raval es Cultural / The Raval is cultural

El Raval es genial / The Raval is congenial
 El Raval es un jaleo / The Raval is a dance

(sung in Arabic)

Progreso, felicidad, y respeto / Progress, happiness, and
 respect

Paz, armonía, música, y tranquilidad / Peace, harmony,
 music, and tranquility

Con la blancura de la paloma / With the whiteness of a dove
 ¡No a la violencia en todo el mundo! / No to violence all over
 the world!

Notably, the Raval is described as “pentagonal,” giving its diversity a spatial dimension that reflects the five major groups living there: Catalans, Castilian-speaking Spaniards, Moroccans, Pakistanis, and Latin Americans. Music is quickly equated with harmony in the packed concert scene, which is interspersed with a montage of Lucía watching over an unconscious Ali in his hospital bed. The only pause in the music is paced to allow for the sound of Ali’s fragile breathing to come through, highlighting the gravity of his injuries. The tense but inspired concert suddenly fades away, and the viewer is transported to another concert sometime in the near future.

A healed and smiling Ali is shown walking into an auditorium with Lucía. It seems that the entirety of the Raval is present as the group shown practicing in the film’s opening sequence makes its way onto the stage. The band has a new lead singer, Ali’s mother Chaharazad. The group has also found a way around their visa problems, as the Senegalese lead singer is present on a giant teleconferencing screen. Music and musical performance is presented as a vehicle by which to overcome ethnic and political tensions, as well as a way to affirm presence where in fact there is absence. As Paul Zumthor notes,

A body is there, one that speaks: the body is represented by a voice emanating from within; it is the most supple and least restricted part

of the body because it goes beyond the body by its variable and playful acoustics . . . More than a look or an expression, voice is sexual; it embodies rather than conveys . . . Speech production (*énonciation de la parole*) thereby assumes value as a symbolic act in and of itself: by virtue of choice, it is exhibition and gift, aggression, conquest, and the hope for an audience. As an exteriorized interiority, freed of any need physically to invade the object of its desire, vocalized sound goes from interior to interior, connecting two existences without recourse to mediation. (7, 8)

To speak or emanate a song is to reach out and converge with the world, to claim and effectuate a series of cultural *traslados* that allow those who face marginalization a literal and figurative voice, to inhabit a gap area without overtly transgressing the realm of others. Voice proclaims presence and travels across contested spaces freely. The group's lead singer Djibi proclaims the triumphant power of music and voice, addressing the audience with an enthusiastic "Soy Djibi, tengo problemas con papeles. ¡No me importan los putos papeles, pero quiero cantar por vosotros!" (I am Djibi, I have problems with papers. I don't care about any damn papers; I want to sing for you!) As Djibi offers his voice, which as Zumthor notes is both "exhibition and gift," the crowd goes wild. A white Spanish woman shakes her head angrily and screams out, "Papers for everyone!" Interestingly, melody and orality/aurality are used to proclaim the obsolescence and perceived obstruction of papers, the "official" givers of identity.

The concert, which serves as the closing sequence of the movie, introduces a song titled "Bcn08001," a reference to the area code for the city of Barcelona. The Senegalese singer's melodic Wolof tunes set a celebratory tone for the performance. The song moves through Catalan and Spanish as different members take a turn at the microphone, until Chaharazad takes the vocal lead. Her face is luminous and energized as she sings emphatically in her native Arabic. The overall effect of the scene is one of synchronicity, as musical styles and languages transition seamlessly and the audience responds as a unit to the musical aggregate. Lucía and

Ali, now established as a couple, dance together and openly show affection. Chaharazad's demeanor is shown to have changed dramatically, as it is clear that being on stage and releasing her voice (rather than keeping quiet to appease her in-laws) is a powerful release for her. As her son Ali comments while she is singing, "Es que canta de cuerpo" (She sings from her body). Indeed, singing, music, and voice are the means by which residents affirm their place in the Raval. It is voice and sound that facilitate the *embodiment* of the Raval as a place of belonging. On stage, Chaharazad is for the first time at home in the Raval and has successfully bridged herself from Morocco to Spain. It is music that was able to help her reconcile her place in Barcelona and her voice that was able to bring others together in celebration of a place they all tenuously call home. The film then draws to a close with this pluralistic concert scene.

As the credits roll, a montage of multiethnic children playing in the Raval is shown. The shots of their smiling faces are interspersed with glimpses of razed buildings and construction sites in the background. The song "Raval plural," previously sung by the children's chorus during the Concert for Peace, is replayed. This continues for several minutes as the entirety of the credits are displayed, giving the viewer an opportunity to process the content of the film. This content is almost entirely musical and performative, though it carries immense social and political meaning as well. *Raval, Raval* depicts the Raval neighborhood of Barcelona as a site where integration is achieved through musical and artistic fusion. While the residents of the Raval may be economically or otherwise alienated from the "mainstream," they are in fact reformulating the very meaning of "mainstream" by creating artistic work that will be diffused and consumed within Barcelona but outside of the city limits as well. In proclaiming their own identity, they are also reformulating the identities of other Europeans and nonnatives. As Avtar Brah points out, "Identity is neither fixed nor singular; rather, it is a constantly changing

relational multiplicity. But during the course of this flux identities do assume particular patterns, as in a kaleidoscope, against particular sets of personal, social, and historical circumstances. Indeed, identity may be understood *as that very process by which multiplicity, contradiction, and instability of subjectivity is signified as having coherence, continuity, stability; as having a core—a continually changing core but the sense of a core nevertheless—that at any given moment is enunciated as the ‘I’*” (*Cartographies*, 123–24). In the case of the Raval neighborhood, it may be posited that the music scene functions as the kaleidoscopic manifestation of the “core” of identity, while the enunciated “I” is actually replaced by a “we.” In *Raval, Raval*, music is presented as a vehicle by which to remap national belonging(s) as well as a means by which to claim and delineate space. As soon as one enters the Raval, it is immediately possible to *hear* the people that the state apparatus may claim to not *see*. By adapting the languages and musical styles of their neighbors as well as the “host” country, musicians in the Raval are creating a sound that is distinctly Barcelonese and by extension wholly European. Through music, the characters featured in *Raval, Raval* are performing in Europe to a global audience *as Europeans*, thereby inscribing themselves into the Spanish/European landscape through sound. If the last concert of the film is taken as an example, Islam is also musically asserting itself as a part of the European experience. The unique soundscape of Barcelona, that city both within and outside of Spain, may be most in line with what the “mainstream” groove of the urban space is set to become.

Crossing the Strait: Abd Al-Malik and the French Connection

Spain has a particularly diverse cultural and musical history to draw upon, yet its immigrant and urban artists are not alone in their quest to rearticulate place and identity through musical

production. The Spanish city of Barcelona borders France, a European neighbor that has long experienced similar flows in immigration patterns. The transnational nature of music expressed in Barcelona's Raval neighborhood is being exported to and refracted in urban spaces across Europe, most obviously in cities like Paris or Marseilles. While Spain is heavily influenced by flamenco fusion music, increasingly the "mainstream" rhythm defining the soundscape of the urban European environment is that of hip-hop. Franco-Congolese rapper Abd Al-Malik is one of those who is utilizing hip-hop to assert his own brand of "Frenchness" or "Europeanness" and belonging while linking Spain to the general European flow of Muslim, Arab, and African immigration. Indeed, Abd Al-Malik looks to Spain as a point of connection in his discourse on immigrant identity, upon which he places a strong emphasis on reframing Islam as local as well as global in the context of Europe. His music openly questions what he defines as the (mis)use(s) and (mis)interpretation(s) of Islam, in turn affirming the faith's compatibility with contemporary European values.

A convert to Islam, Abd Al-Malik was born Régis Fayette-Mikano in Paris to Congolese parents in 1975. The family moved to Brazzaville (the capital city of the Democratic Republic of Congo) for several years before relocating to Strasbourg, in the Alsatian region of France. The young man grew up in the tough *quartier* of Neuhoff, where he admits to having become an angry juvenile delinquent. He never, however, lost his curiosity for learning or his burgeoning interest in music, which ultimately defined his personal and professional path. Abd Al-Malik became part of his first rap group, the New African Poets (NAP), in 1994 and eventually completed a university degree in classics and philosophy, something that would later greatly impact his musical outlook.

Like many in the marginalized French urban outskirts, Abd Al-Malik was initially attracted to figures of the United States civil

rights movement and the American rap aesthetic as a means of fomenting a collective identity and as a mode of self-expression. As Hishaam Aidi notes,

Most French-born Arabs have never been to Harlem but “claim kinship” with African-Americans as they draw inspiration from the black freedom struggle. Numerous French-Arab (Beur) intellectuals and activists have noted their indebtedness to African-American liberation thought, and the secular pro-integration Beur movement of the early 1980s organized campaigns and marches modeled on the US civil rights struggle. But in the early 1990s, as the impoverished, ethnically segregated *banlieues* mushroomed around French cities, the discourse on *intégration* began to give way to talk of self-imposed exclusion and warnings that the children of immigrants “had gone in a separate direction.” The region of Lyons, where 100,000 gathered for the famous march for *intégration* in 1983, is today cited by commentators as evidence of the failure of assimilation. Lyons, by one account, has become a “ghetto of Arabs,” and fallen to Islamist influence, boasting six neighborhood boys in the US military detention center at Guantánamo Bay. (45, 46)

The “kinship” that Beur (French-Arab) and *noir* (black French) inhabitants of the *banlieue* feel with regard to African Americans may in part lead back to the African American community’s affinity toward Islam in recent decades. Certainly, Islam in the French context has been racialized in a manner similar to that observed in the United States during the American civil rights movement, when Christianity was at times portrayed as the religion of the oppressive “white establishment” and Islam was proposed as a liberating, colorblind faith. While Malcolm X and the polemical Nation of Islam became linked with “blackness” in the 1960s, Islam has long been viewed as the predominant faith (and political recourse) of the nonwhite, “nonnative” “Other” living at the fringes of the French urban landscape. In this context, the “Other” is most often Arab or black African, while the brand of Islam popularized in the *banlieue* is one that may both feed upon and underscore the alienation of generations of primarily young, unemployed males having difficulty finding their place in French society.¹⁰

As a young black man in the *cité*, Abd Al-Malik was attracted to the empowerment and guidance promised by the Islam prevalent in the *banlieue*. He converted in his late teens and officially changed his name. The artist continued to pursue music while associating with fundamentalist Islam for several years, but he ultimately found that his particular views and individual relationship to Islam were incompatible with the perspectives that he was being taught to espouse. The conflict he felt is made clear in an interview with *Ode* magazine in April of 2009:

Though he'd been moved by Malcolm X's vision of Islam as a unifying tradition, he was quickly caught up in an extremist form of the religion that he says offered "a black-and-white vision." His new teachers preached obedience to a fixed set of rules of behavior, including restrictions on dating or even on shaking hands with women. For a few years, Abd al Malik accompanied a group of street preachers who traveled the country cajoling young men to go to the mosque, grow their beards long and give up liquor and drugs. The Muslim teachings popular in the French ghetto weren't explicitly violent, says Abd al Malik, but they encouraged young immigrants to scorn everything Western, secular and modern, thus deepening their sense of alienation.

As a teenager, Abd al Malik couldn't reconcile the contradictions of his new identity. His faith was as zealous and genuine as his passion for rap, an art his religion condemned. He remained caught up in a painful paradox for years, made worse because the means he had to finance his musical efforts—drug dealing and petty crime—were also irreligious. One day, at his lowest point, he went to a local crime leader and asked for a loan. Later, alone in his apartment clutching a garbage bag full of money, he sat and wept.

This inner turmoil drove Abd al Malik to seek a deeper understanding of his faith. He found answers in Sufism, the contemplative, mystical branch of Islam. He met a North African spiritual teacher who taught him that the heart of his religion was love and awareness of the spiritual nature of every human being. "Islam is a religion of love," Abd al Malik says. "It is being in peace with yourself and with others. The Islam of the ghetto is a ghetto of Islam. It is not the true Islam."

Abd Al-Malik's experience with Islam is that of an ongoing voyage, one that is reflected in his musical anthology. He initially followed a path of fundamentalism and racial exclusion, later renouncing that "black and white vision" of religion in favor of a more inclusive reading of Islam. Abd Al-Malik turned to Sufism and journeyed to study with Sufi masters in Morocco.¹¹ His statement that "the Islam of the ghetto is a ghetto of Islam. It is not the true Islam" is declarative of Abd Al-Malik's project: to dissect and rearticulate commonly held religious and societal beliefs through an innovative, politically aware aesthetic of hip-hop/slam poetry.¹² He sets out to *trasladar* Islam out of the ghetto and into the fabric of European life. Abd Al-Malik has set about developing a very European-based, Islam-centric perspective that is uniquely rooted in France, yet appeals to a number of immigrant communities around Europe.

The brief *Ode* magazine interview passage publicly proclaims the framework of Abd Al-Malik's music and serves as a point of departure by which to begin to analyze his work. Abd Al-Malik's artistic point of reference is that of conflict and layered identity. As a black (*noir*) immigrant growing up in a *cité* (project), Abd Al-Malik shares his lived experience of internal isolation within France based on ethnicity and origin. At one point he turned to the socially "expected" outcome, a life of crime, but was steered around by his paradoxical love of two things commonly deemed incompatible in secular French society: a love of Western philosophy and an adherence to the Islamic faith. Yet, when a conflict of interest appears to arise between these two belief systems, Abd Al-Malik did not choose to abandon one or the other. Instead, he chose to reevaluate Islam as it was being presented to him. He turned to Sufism, a mystical form of Islam that stresses spirituality and the quest for knowledge. Abd Al-Malik, having himself been drawn to Islam in the environs of the troubled *cité*, embarks upon a personal, artistic process of *intégration* in which hip-hop serves as a vehicle that attempts to "de-ghettoize" Islam while making

French and European cultural values and discursive *knowledge* accessible and pertinent to the *banlieue*. Interestingly, the Quran itself may be an inspiration and fertile vehicle for this undertaking, as it literally means “the recitation” and is written in an eloquent poetic versification meant to be *heard*. Abd Al-Malik undertakes an operation of faith-based *traslado*, in which he voices and affirms Islam as part of a European cultural legacy that is and has long been present.

In this way, Abd Al-Malik is entering a realm of sociopolitical discourse previously dominated by those speaking from elite institutions or families of privilege. What sets Abd Al-Malik apart from others who advocate for a European Islam that blends Muslim piety with civic involvement are his origins and his varied audience. While a French citizen born in Paris, Abd Al-Malik is considered an immigrant. Meanwhile, Tariq Ramadan, perhaps his nearest counterpart in terms of discursive message, is seen as part of a privileged intellectual circle. Ramadan is a Swiss citizen of Egyptian heritage, as well as the grandson of the famous (and often controversial) Muslim thinker and activist Hasan al-Banna, the founder of the Muslim Brotherhood. The Muslim Brotherhood has advocated making the Quran and Sunnah (the sayings and teachings of the Prophet Muhammad) the major organizing points for the Muslim individual, family, and state. Tariq Ramadan’s father was exiled to Switzerland by Gamal Abdul Nasser, as the Brotherhood was banned in Egypt until the ouster of President Hosni Mubarak in 2011. As a result, Tariq Ramadan was born in Geneva in 1962 and is now a professor at Oxford, where he represents the high-culture, politically linked end of Muslim thought. While Abd Al-Malik and Tariq Ramadan share a similar message and have met in the past, Al-Malik has an advantage over Ramadan when it comes to reaching urban youth: he has lived in the *cité*, he speaks like the young people he sings to, he dresses like them, and he articulates their frustrations. Yet, like Tariq Ramadan, he is also able to share the stage and engage in televised

debates with, for example, the chiefs of staff for the political campaigns of the likes of French Far-Right candidate Philippe de Villiers. While works such as Tariq Ramadan's *Western Muslims and the Future of Islam* (2004) and *What I Believe* (2010) have fostered public discourse on "moderate" Islam, it may actually be highly accessible yet informed philosophical and artistic works such as Abd Al-Malik's that are at an advantage. Abd Al-Malik's music achieves a blend of high/low culture that appeals to both those that feel left out of France and those that are comfortable within it, ultimately proposing the idea that despite everything, France is one.

While Abd Al-Malik's discography has always been germane to the topics of immigration, race, Islam, and national belonging(s), I have chosen to analyze songs through the lens of the reconfiguration of European identity from his album *Gibraltar* (2006). This album most strongly tackles the place of Islam in Europe following the New York terrorist events of September 11, 2001. The work's title immediately references a site of cultural and historical crossings and conflict: Gibraltar, a peninsular territory at the southern tip of Iberia. Gibraltar is a landmark of the Mediterranean and overlooks the waters of the strait that shares its name. It was ceded to Britain by Spain in 1713 following the War of the Spanish Succession. The territory, viewed by Spain as a British colony connected to Spanish sovereign soil, remains a point of contention in Spanish-British relations. Yet the nuanced position that Gibraltar maintains in Spanish history goes back much further: the name "Gibraltar" itself is derived from the Arabic *Jabal Tāriq* (Mountain of Tariq). This is a direct reference to the Berber Umayyad general Tariq ibn Ziyad who led the Moorish incursion of Iberia in 711, paving the way for the creation of Al-Andalus and the more than seven centuries of history of Islam on the Iberian Peninsula. Abd Al-Malik strategically chose to name his album after a geographical axis linking Spain, Islam, Africa, and Europe. Notably, it is also a location that overlooks and in

a sense bears witness to the migratory transit across the Strait of Gibraltar, a point of reference between “here” and “there” that implies a cycle of departure and return.

There is a pervasive sense of transience and movement present in the songs that Abd Al-Malik presents in his compilation. The album’s 15 tracks are introspective and detail personal journeys of *arriving* at faith and understanding one’s self. Indeed, the title track, “Gibraltar,” immerses the listener in the experience of the immigrant moving across time, seas, and space:

Sur le détroit de Gibraltar, y’a un jeune noir qui pleure un
rêve qui prendra vie, une fois passé Gibraltar.
Sur le détroit de Gibraltar, y’a un jeune noir qui se demande
si l’histoire le retiendra comme celui qui portait le nom de
cette montagne.
Sur le détroit de Gibraltar, y’a un jeune noir qui meurt sa vie
bête de “gangsta rappeur” mais . . .
Sur le détroit de Gibraltar, y’a un jeune homme qui va naître,
qui va être celui que les autres empêchaient d’être.
Sur le détroit de Gibraltar, y’a un jeune noir qui boit, dans ce
bar où les espoirs se bousculent, une simple canette de Fanta.
Il cherche comme un chien sans collier le foyer qu’il n’a en
fait jamais eu, et se dit que p’t-être, bientôt, il ne cherchera
plus.
Et ça rit autour de lui, et ça pleure au fond de lui.
Faut rien dire et tout est dit, et soudain . . . soudain il se fait
derviche tourneur,
Il danse sur le bar, il danse, il n’a plus peur, enfin il hurle
comme un faqir, de la vie devient disciple.

[On the Strait of Gibraltar, there is a young black man who
cries a dream that will come to life once Gibraltar is passed.
On the Strait of Gibraltar, there is a young black man who
asks himself if history will remember him like the one who
carried the name of that mountain.
On the Strait of Gibraltar, there is a young black man who
dies his stupid “gangsta rapper” lifestyle, but . . .

On the Strait of Gibraltar there is a young man that will be born, that will become the one that others kept him from being.

On the Strait of Gibraltar there is a young black man who drinks, in the bar where hopes are dashed, a simple can of Fanta.

He searches like a dog without a collar for the home that he never had and tells himself that, perhaps, he will search no more.

And there is laughter around him, and there is crying within him.

Nothing needs to be said and everything has been said, suddenly . . . suddenly he becomes a whirling dervish.

He dances on the bar, he dances, he is not afraid anymore, at last he screams like a *faqir*, and becomes a disciple of life.]

The experience presented by the song is one of rupture and desperation but also one that evokes an almost sublime sense of hope. The character created by Abd Al-Malik is nameless yet distinctly classed and racialized, repeatedly referred to as “a young black man” originating from sub-Saharan Africa. Unsure of his journey’s outcome, he hopes that, like Tariq ibn Ziyad, some part of him will embed itself into the rocky (Arab-European) landscape and be remembered. This characterization makes the song’s protagonist seem at once distinct and universal, and it foreshadows the anonymity that the young man will face both en route to Europe and upon his arrival.

Interestingly, the song/narrative reaches a frenzied peak when the young black man imagines himself a whirling dervish arriving in Morocco, where he “screams like a *faqir* and becomes a disciple of life.” In Islam, *faqir* refers to a Sufi Muslim ascetic who lives on alms; he is a wandering Dervish who travels to learn and spread wisdom. Not only is this portion of the song self-referential, as it mirrors Abd Al-Malik’s own circular journey to Europe and toward Morocco in search of religious knowledge; it also presents the immigrant as possessing a distinct capacity and

access to insight precisely *because* of his or her pervasive displacement and sense of estrangement. Rather than being a handicap, the “in-betweenness” of the immigrant is presented as a site of possibility as well as of loss. As is common in the work of Abd Al-Malik, Islam is presented as a path to learning and self-realization, not as an end unto itself. In this sense, the song “Gibraltar” may also be read as proposing (Islamic) Morocco as a corridor of in-betweenness that connects or begins to reconcile the traditions of Europe and Africa. The song concludes with the lines,

Sur le détroit de Gibraltar . . . sur le détroit de Gibraltar . . .
 Vogue, vogue vers le merveilleux royaume du Maroc,
 Sur le détroit de Gibraltar, vogue, vogue vers le merveilleux
 royaume du Maroc . . .

[On the Strait of Gibraltar . . . on the Strait of Gibraltar . . .
 Sail, sail toward the marvelous kingdom of Morocco
 On the Strait of Gibraltar, sail, sail toward the marvelous
 kingdom of Morocco . . .]

The song places Morocco as a site of encounter and a primary objective for sub-Saharan immigrants, who must arrive at Morocco first before continuing on to Europe. The use of the word “sail” may be taken poetically as a *moving-toward* of sub-Saharan immigrants to Morocco or literally with regard to immigrants in Europe sailing back to Morocco in a quest for spiritual fulfillment, thereby coming full circle. The “marvelous kingdom of Morocco” is positioned as a launching pad toward Europe and as a spiritual destination in and of itself. Subtly, Abd Al-Malik evokes the historical intimacy between Morocco and Spain and Morocco as a place where the North and South, as well as the East and West, intersect. While the “young black man” dreams of and “sails” upon the Strait of Gibraltar, it is Morocco that he must assimilate first. Interestingly, the site of possibility and transit is shown here to be the Strait of Gibraltar itself, the route *to* and *through* Spain. Indeed, the name

Gibraltar presupposes Islam as native to Spain. In this manner, Abd Al-Malik, as a French-Congolese artist, starts to purposefully trace out a topography of immigration that loops Spain (and its long-standing connections to Islam) into the Franco-centric discourse on immigration and Islamic identity.

The shifting dialogue on Euro-Islamic identity is something that Abd Al-Malik continuously tackles in the album *Gibraltar*. While the rapper/songwriter often alludes to the legacy of Islam in Europe as well as to his own spiritual convictions, the song “12-9-2001” (also known as “Le 12 septembre,” or “The 12th of September”) undertakes a riskier political discussion of Islam in the West. The song, whose name refers to the day after the New York City terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, explores the artist’s reaction to the destruction of the Twin Towers from the perspective of a Muslim residing in Europe:

Ok, un peu plus de son dans le casque! Ouai comme ça c’est bon.

J’avais déjà un flow de tarés lorsque les tours jumelles se sont effondrées,

j’avais déjà un flow de dingues lorsque les tours jumelles se sont éteintes.

Je fus choqué dans mon intime et je vous jure,

que si j’n’avais pas eu la foi j’aurais eu honte d’être muslim.

Après ça fallait qu’on montre aux yeux du monde,

que nous aussi nous n’étions que des hommes,

que s’il y avait des fous, la majorité d’entre nous ne mélangeait pas, la politique avec la foi.

[OK, some more sound on the stereo! Yes, it’s good like that.

My flow was already going when the Twin Towers collapsed.

My flow was already crazy when the Twin Towers were extinguished.

I was shocked in the depths of myself and I swear to you, had it not been for my faith,

I would have been ashamed to be Muslim.

After that it became necessary to show to the eyes of the
world
That we too are simply men,
that if there are lunatics, the majority among us does not mix
politics and faith.]

Here, Abd Al-Malik sets the framework for a chronicle of the discourse and events immediately following 9/11 from a European orientation. He begins by referencing his music, which was “already flowing” when the Twin Towers fell. He then shifts to the terrorist attacks of 9/11 as a point of rupture and interruption that delineates a “before and after” timeline to being Muslim, which implies a coming shift in the rapper’s own creative output. When he declares that “had it not been for his faith” he would have felt ashamed to be Muslim, he draws a clear line of demarcation between violence in the name of Islam and the faith itself as he lives it. Abd Al-Malik makes clear his own estrangement from the ideology behind the events. While the act of terrorism itself was the product of a calculated and willful “mixing of politics and faith,” the political aftermath described by Abd Al-Malik continued to reproduce a similar, reactive ideology on European soil. In the song, he explains how the paranoia and fear following the events of 9/11 set about constructing Muslims as the “new” enemy within, an adversary that was to be identified and cast out:

Après cela on a tous été pointés du doigt,
ils se sont demandés peut-être qu'ils sont tous comme ça.
Des canons s'mirent à bombarder Bagdad et des corps
s'effondrèrent en Espagne.
Nos leaders se mirent en geindre et la Suisse sur un plateau
d'télé face à un homme d'état melangea, la politique avec la
foi.

Je découvris la suspicion, c'est quand un homme a peur et
que l'autre en face ne le rassure pas.
C'est quand celui q'on croyait connaître devient soudain,

celui qu'on n'connait pas.
 Les Pays-Bas assassinèrent le descendant d'un peintre de
 renom,
 la France continua à dire non.
 L'Europe se scinda en deux, les uns et les autres qui
 n'voulaiient pas qu'on
 confonde, la politique avec la foi.

[After that, fingers were pointed at everyone
 They asked themselves if perhaps they were all like that.
 Cannons pointed and ready to bomb Baghdad, and bodies
 collapsed in Spain.
 Our leaders look at each other and gripe, and Switzerland on
 a television platform in front of a statesman mixes . . . politics
 and faith.

I discovered that suspicion is when a man is afraid and
 the other in front of him does not reassure him. It's when
 one that we thought we knew suddenly becomes someone
 unknown.
 The Netherlands assassinates the descendant of a renowned
 painter,
 And France continues to say "no."
 Europe splits in two, between these and others who don't
 want to confuse
 politics and religion.]

Abd Al-Malik's lyrics then describe or allude to the chain reaction of literal and discursive violence toward Muslims that followed the events of 9/11, as a heterogeneous community of believers was cast into the role of "potential terrorists." The line "they asked themselves if *perhaps they were all like that*" is particularly telling. While Abd Al-Malik generally includes himself when speaking of Europe or the French, here he uses the term "they" to describe the us-versus-them mentality that arose following the World Trade Center attacks. Abd Al-Malik's professed belief in Islam automatically placed him at the exclusionary end of the "us" in the French

national sense, something that was replicated for Muslims across Europe. Given the sheer number of Muslim immigrants residing across Europe, the local and quotidian impact of the sudden and overt alienation of Muslims as the potential enemy was perhaps more immediate and magnified than it was within the United States itself.

As Abd Al-Malik goes on to recount the anti-Islamic debates that pervaded the media, the 2004 Madrid train bombings that followed in Spain, and the 2004 assassination of filmmaker Theo van Gogh in the Netherlands,¹³ the rapper outlines the process by which fear and rage traced the parameters of Muslim alienation in Europe. Abd Al-Malik is condemning a public discourse that built a monolithic image of Muslims as inherently incompatible with the universal, liberal ideals of “Europeanness.” Abd Al-Malik soon heightens the dialectical level of the dialogue, explicitly bringing the discussion into the realm of the literary, the philosophical, and the national. He employs French intellectual values to explain how an exclusionary discourse that was constructed at a time of fear must now be deconstructed according to those same ideals of liberalism. It is at the end of the song that Abd Al-Malik truly claims and molds the song as his own, declaring,

On allait tout déconstruire, déconstruire avec trois D comme,
Deleuze, Derrida et Debré.
Ni fondamentalistes ni extrémistes de l’islam ou d’ l’a laïcité,
mais là: ça devient lourd j’crois.
Trop compliqué en tout cas, et puis moi, je n’mélange pas,
la politique avec la foi.

[We were going to deconstruct everything, deconstruct with
three Ds like Deleuze, Derrida, and Debré.
Neither fundamentalists nor extremists of Islam or *laïcité*,
But there, that becomes too heavy, I think.
Too complicated, in any case, and I, I don’t mix
politics and faith.]

In calling for a rethinking of Islam in Europe, Abd Al-Malik parallels fundamentalist Islam and extreme secularism (as manifested in *la laïcité*, or France's vision of secularism according to its Republican ideals), positing them as similarly oppressive. While typical French political discourse dictates that the values of *liberté, égalité, and fraternité* (liberty, equality/sameness, and brotherhood) must supersede other allegiances in order to be fully realized, Abd Al-Malik proposes that this very insistence on a universal French identity is actually impeding the unity of France. Here, Abd Al-Malik astutely chooses to interpolate three major icons of French/Western thought in his argument against the current definition of "Frenchness." When he raps that a "deconstruction" is needed, it may be taken in two ways: first, in the literal sense of dissecting and tearing apart an apparatus (be it social, media, or political) and examining the sum of its parts; and second, in the academic, literary definition of deconstruction.

The thinkers that Abd Al-Malik chooses to cite are those who have shaped the French Republic's ideology as it exists today: Gilles Deleuze (1925–1995) was a popular French philosopher interested in metaphysics, aesthetics, and psychology. Jacques Derrida (1930–2004) was an Algerian-born French philosopher and academic best known for Continental philosophy and his development of a critical technique known as *deconstruction*. Michel Debré (1912–1996) was a French Gaullist politician considered to be the "father" of the current constitution of France.¹⁴ By placing these icons at the end of a chronicle of violence and isolation, Abd Al-Malik implies that Deleuze, Derrida, and Debré are constitutive of a framework that he seeks to work both *with* and *against*.

In order to better understand Abd Al-Malik's references here, it is necessary to propose a preliminary introduction to deconstructionism as a theoretical method that blends literature and philosophy as a means by which to critique or examine the creation and dissemination of meaning. As *The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism* (2001; edited by Vincent Leitch et al.) summarizes,

Deconstruction is not just a school but also an analytic procedure developed by Derrida, a historian of philosophy, that has become a methodological instrument widely used by all manner of literary and cultural theorists and critics. A “deconstruction” involves inversion and reinscription of a traditional philosophical opposition. First, one locates in a chosen text a significant conceptual opposition (for example, nature/culture, purity/contamination, animality/humanity, or male/female) *at a moment of maximum instability*. To invert the binary pair, one shows how the belated second term is actually indispensable to and constitutively prior to the primary term. For instance, it is from this vantage point of culture that nature is named and defined; similarly, the idea of purity depends on the prior possibility of contamination. To reinscribe the terms of the opposition, one must destabilize and transform—deconstruct—the usual understanding of the concepts, especially their temporal and hierarchical relations. (22)

What deconstruction does, in its simplest interpretation, is break apart and invert the assumed relationships between things. As Derrida famously proclaimed, “Il n’y a pas de hors-texte” (There is no outside-the-text) meaning that everything is interrelated and nothing is outside of the parameters of philosophical (re) consideration. While Derrida adeptly applied this to literary criticism, successfully arguing that writing (*l’écriture*) actually precedes speech,¹⁵ Abd Al-Malik’s lyrics propose deconstructionism as a way to question the typical top-down approach to French culture. While citing Deleuze, Derrida, and Debré, all renowned French thinkers, he seizes upon “a moment of maximum instability” when denouncing the “universalist” nature of the ideals of the French Republic.

By calling attention to the universal icons of “Frenchness,” Abd Al-Malik points out that in order to have a French universal culture you must also have that which you exclude from it (immigrants, Muslims, Arabs), which presupposes the presence of these groups. Abd Al-Malik’s insistence on immigrant and Muslim belonging and shared ownership of French culture is reiterated in his musical choices. He employs American jazz as well as

traditional Arabic and African rhythms, collaborating with artists such as Souaad Massi (Algeria) and Wallen (Morocco). Yet his arrangements often involve pianos, violins, and other instruments viewed as “classically” European, while also integrating the style of traditional French *chanson*.¹⁶ While his music tackles wider issues of faith and exclusion, Abd Al-Malik consciously chooses to create a brand of hip-hop that is undeniably French as well as distinctly European.¹⁷

In this manner, Abd Al-Malik calls attention to the fact that you cannot actively exclude that which is not already present and that the Muslims, immigrants, and inhabitants of the *banlieue* are already a part of the fabric of French culture. By including Deleuze, Derrida, and Debré as a reference in a hip-hop song about post-9/11 Western Islam, Abd Al-Malik counteracts the idea that “high culture” belongs to some and not to others and that “Frenchness” or European values belong to a select few. The song, which became popularized on the French pop charts, brought philosophy to the *banlieue* and the *banlieue* to mainstream French culture. Abd Al-Malik’s work also pinpoints places of crossing and intersection for European Islam, among which are the urban space and the Strait of Gibraltar itself. In doing this, Abd Al-Malik successfully loops Spain in not only as part of the European immigrant route but also as a site through which Islam can be rooted as part of the legacy of Europe. While Spain is portrayed as more European than ever, so is Islam, a religion to which Spain is inextricably linked. Abd Al-Malik, therefore, creates music that can be both heard and “read” as evocative of three major movements in European immigrant hip-hop: the globalization and Europeanization of Islam, the meaning of belonging in the new European Union, and the creation of a transnational community of immigrants united by faith, music, and media.

Lyrical Belongings: *El Moro* and the Hip-Hop Umma

Certainly, Abd Al-Malik's musical production loops France into the "Moorish" dynamic by integrating the transient imaginary of the Strait of Gibraltar into a wider European identity discourse. Simultaneously, Abd Al-Malik also encourages a refashioning of "Frenchness" by challenging classic French philosophy and national discourses as possible sources of inclusion rather than exclusion. "Moorishness," then, becomes both nationalized and Europeanized. This expansion and modification of Moorish identity has been even more widely interpreted and globalized in contemporary hip-hop through the collaborative work of musical artists both within and outside of France.

Founded in the 1990s by brothers Nikkfurie and Hi-Tekk (Ahmed and Mohamed Mazouz)—who are originally from Oujda, Morocco, but who have settled in Noisy-le-Sec, a *banlieue* outside of Paris—the rap group La Caution have sought to create a dialogue about the transnationalization of the "new-Moorish" experience. La Caution's brand of hip-hop connects the challenges faced by Arab or Muslim immigrants to Europe with the rootlessness felt by Arabs under oppressive circumstances in North Africa and the Middle East. Having crossed the Strait of Gibraltar, the "Moor" as a present-day identity marker in Europe becomes lyrically evocative of global Arab crossings and displacements. The 2005 song "Peines de Maures" (Plight of the Moors) is an interspersing of dialogues and voices belonging to Nikkfurie and Hi-Tekk (speaking of their own experiences as outsiders within France), an anonymous "journalist," and a nameless Iraqi man who has just lost a child in the context of the US occupation of Iraq. The overlaid discourses, seemingly disparate, are actually woven together in a manner that creates a unifying thread of displacement and loss, one understood by the "Maures" both "here" (in Europe) and "there" (in Iraq).

As the quick beats thump in the background, the brothers' sharp rhymes debate the prevailing American and European dialogues on Arabs, in ways both similar to and opposite from the methodology of Abd Al-Malik. Rather than disavowing themselves and their faith from possible accusations of terrorism as Abd Al-Malik does with "12 septembre," La Caution turns the pejorative labeling around and designates as terrorists those who condemn a people (Arabs and/or Muslims) without any understanding of their culture and context:

Hi-Tekk:

Quelques écrivains, terroristes intellectuels pensent faire de l'argent
en stigmatisant toute une culture sans même la connaître,
ignorance recouverte de pseudo connaissances hors contextes.
Arabesques folles: mort complète . . .

Nikkfurie:

Nous sommes français en freelance, étrangers en puissance.
L'inconscient des gens, même de bonne foi, nous voue
méfiance.
Ce pays est presque le notre . . . Mais seulement presque!

[Some writers, intellectual terrorists think to make money
in stigmatizing a whole culture without even knowing it
Ignorance wrapped in pseudoknowledge, out of contexts
Crazy Arabesques: Complete death.

We are freelance French, fully strangers
The lack of awareness of people, even in good faith, makes us
weary
This country is almost ours . . . but only almost!]

In saying that they are "freelance" French, La Caution indicates that French identity is for them incomplete, partial, and something that is not freely given. "Frenchness" is not unconditional; it is instead described as a closed construct inaccessible to those

deemed “other.” While Abd Al-Malik uses the cultural tools and pillars of French thought to stake a claim on French society, *La Caution* is more circumspect. Viewing a “full” French identity as not fully within reach, they relate instead to a “Maure” (Moor) identity that acknowledges and incorporates a lingering sense of difference or exclusion while invoking a time when “Moors” were a part of Europe. This incorporation points to a “completeness” to be found in Moorish identity even when a void is made evident. As Hishaam Aidi observes,

As Western nationalists portray Islam as a threat to freedom and security, and launch wars to bring democracy to the Muslim world, the “multi-colored hordes” of the West are reaching for teachings and precedents (like Moorish Spain) . . . Moorish Spain was a place where Islam was in and of the West, and inhabited a Golden Age before the rise of the genocidal, imperial West, a historical moment that disenchanted Westerners can share with Muslims. Neither Muslim nostalgia for nor Western Orientalist romanticism about Andalusia is new, but it is new for different subordinate groups in the West to be yearning for “return” to Moorish Spain’s multiculturalism. (51, 52)

An Arab/immigrant identity that links back to the Moors of Spain is reflective of not only an awareness of a time when “Islam was in and of the West” but also an acknowledgment of current systematic exclusions that mirror the trope of loss inherent in the date 1492. While the Iraqi man in the “Peines de Maures” track plaintively repeats “What kind of embargo had we?” indicating little recourse in his own life’s circumstances, *La Caution* does claim a kind of agency and belonging in their own displacement, finding a site of fixity in a Moorish marker that both encompasses and transcends their own European situation. In a sense, the Strait of Gibraltar “bridges” France and Iraq in “Peines de Maures,” while the term “Maures” allows a reappropriation of space and history by those who feel dispossessed from it. Indeed, the axis that unites the perspectives of the bereft man in Iraq and the Franco-Moroccan rappers is a shared identity as the “Maure,”

which becomes a neutral point of shared experience, linking past and present. The Iraqi, too, has become the internally displaced “Maure.”¹⁸

This more pragmatic, overtly politicized, and transnational vision of Moorishness is reflected in a 2007 song titled “Mes Endroits” (My Places) on which Nikkfurie collaborated with the Palestinian hip-hop crew DAM (Da Arabian MCs). Comprising Suhell Nafar, Tamer Nafar, and Mahmoud Jreri, DAM was also founded in the 1990s and is based in Lyd, a city rife with the tensions and clashes that pervade the ongoing Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Seeking to create a counternarrative that reflected their own reality as Palestinians within Israel,¹⁹ DAM turned to the arts to give a secular voice to life under occupation and the constant specter of violence. By design, DAM’s music and message are nonreligious, as they choose to focus on the political situation shared by all Palestinians without affiliating themselves to any faith group. The structure of the intimately titled “Mes Endroits” is similar to “Peines de Maures,” in that the song is a shared discourse of displacement in which the interlocutors take turns describing locations and lives that signal parallel senses of placelessness. Rapping about themselves but also to and about one another, DAM and Nikkfurie create a lyrical bind between the French *banlieue* and Palestine:

DAM: From the Ghettos of Palestine to the Ghettos of
France . . .

Nikkfurie:

My 'hood is far away from Palestine
But ghettoized just the same by the police . . .
Our tie to our blocks is just like an umbilical cord
Nothing ever changes; you've been here for over a pontificate!
. . . This is my 'hood; I see it with my own eyes
Ladies and gentlemen, my rap is precious to me

Tamer Nafar:

Let's take a look at the place I live in, house demolition
around

So many educated people but no wall to hang their degree on

Are you ready to enter the 'hood? Who is going to drive?

No worries, if there are Arabs in the car

The police are behind the steering wheel

Suhell Nafar:

Ohhhh ohhhhh, In our 'hood

The sewer is bigger than a pool, rats bigger than the cats

And from a demographic point of view

Mice are outnumbering human beings²⁰

Early on in the song, DAM deems the exclusion of Arabs in European society analogous to the Palestinian situation in Israel, declaring both living conditions “ghettoes.” The dialogue then moves on to issues of belonging, whereby Nikkfurie states, “Our tie to our blocks is just like an umbilical cord,” and Tamer Nafar pronounces, “Let’s take a look at the place I live in, house demolition all around.” These lyrics make a strong tie to place and lineage, despite the fact that the tenuous sites of “home” are mired in looming danger or threat of expulsion. The raw physicality of the site descriptions is juxtaposed against the abstract, intangible “outside” location of the narrators as subjects. The notion of not being fully accounted for even while present leads to a discourse of dehumanization, in which the Arabs in question view their position as comparable to that of rodents: “And from a demographic point of view / Mice are outnumbering human beings.” While “Mes Endroits” affirms the continued Arab identity of European immigrants such as Nikkfurie, it is intrinsically a song about the fractured relationship between a “host” nation and an Arab subject that exists both within and outside of citizenship. The act of rapping, described as “precious,” highlights the importance of music in its attempts to reconcile the points of fracture between mere presence and full citizenship.

Taking into account Nikkfurie's previous lyrical work linking the "Maure" to Arabs in Iraq, in "Mes Endroits" the designation of "Moor" is transnationalized to mean far more than an Arab or Muslim (as these are not always synonymous) in a Spanish or European context. Rather, the term points to a new designation of "Moor" as a cultural survivor, an Arab who is at home both nowhere and everywhere, ever the traveler and migrant. In the context of "Mes Endroits," the traditional *moro* is adapted into a protagonist of globalization, whose uprootings mirror those of Arab populations far beyond the Strait of Gibraltar. If the Moor/Maure is always reminiscent of an expulsion, however, "Mes Endroits" also evokes the looming possibility—and drive—toward a return to a lost place in time. In the case of La Caution, the frame of reference of "return" may be linked to the period of Al-Andalus on the Iberian Peninsula, in which the Moor is established as an integral player in European cultural history, whereas for DAM the "return" would signal a reversal of the marginalization that has played out for the Palestinians since the 1948 creation of the state of Israel. In both cases, the Maure/Moro is appropriated toward very contemporary sociopolitical scenarios, becoming symbolic of a wider reclaiming of Arab sense of place and space. A collaboration such as "Mes Endroits" proposes a remapping of the Moors' trajectory as fully circular: from Morocco, to Europe, to the Middle East, and back again.

This establishment of a transnational artistic community professing a Moorish identity is also witnessed in the work of Danish rap group Outlandish. The group, formed in 1997, consists of three members: Waqas Ali Qadri (Danish-born, of Pakistani descent), Isam Bachiri (Danish-born, of Moroccan background), and Lenny Martínez (born in Honduras to Cuban and Honduran parents). Unlike the members of DAM, all the group's members are openly religious, with Waqas Ali Qadri and Isam Bachiri professing the Muslim faith and Lenny Martínez a practicing Catholic. The group, a commercially successful musical export,

consciously seeks to integrate a wide variety of cultural traditions in their musical production. While they sing primarily in English as an international lingua franca, they routinely intersperse lyrics in Spanish, Urdu, Punjabi, Arabic, and Danish into their albums. Their socially aware, religiously open songs have touched upon a number of sensitive political issues, such as the liberation of Palestine (“Look Into My Eyes” and “Try Not to Cry”), the taboo of HIV in Muslim communities (“Nothing Left to Do”), poverty (“I Only Ask of God,” a remake of Argentine León Gieco’s “Sólo le pido a Dios”), and the difficulties faced by immigrants in the European metropolis (“Just Me” and “Una palabra,” or “One Word”). Certainly, Outlandish has constructed a tapestry of cultural interconnection that has been immensely well received in Denmark and beyond.

Like other Europe-based artists, Outlandish has sought to create a transnational hip-hop *umma* that seeks to unite and normalize the Muslim/Arab immigrant experience(s) in Europe. As Eugenia Sapiera notes, the *umma* proposed by contemporary media and arts seeks to supersede religious, ethnic, and national differences in inscribing a new visible space for Islam:

Transnationalism for Islam is therefore linked not to the migration of people but to the migration of ideas, to communication and debate across boundaries, in short to the development of Islam as a transnational public space, “based on a set of extranational social norms—the many interpretations of *sharia*, “God’s plans and commands . . .” [This] means that transnational Islam must be thought “beyond migration” but also, from the current perspective, it must be thought as highlighting the struggle for authority in this public space, as well as the many exchanges and interactions between localities and the transnational meaning and message of Islam. Finally, if we accept that transnational Islam is linked through ideas, communication and debate, then the role of the (new) media becomes even more pronounced. (100)

Outlandish enters this debate and claims authority for Islam in Europe by rearticulating and reenvisioning the history of Islam

in Spain as a European history and legacy. Given the group's frequent use of the term *moro* to describe themselves or Arabs at large, the group chooses to utilize Spain and the designation of *moro* as a point of departure or axis by which to construct a legacy of belonging for Islam in Europe. Rather than viewing the term as exclusionary, Outlandish adopts *moro* not only as a means by which to include Muslims in the lineage and history of Europe but also as an expression of endearment and belonging that Arabs and Muslims may apply among themselves. Contemporary immigration is theorized in current political terms but is also portrayed as a legitimization and a continuation of a shared past. Indeed, one of the group's unofficial fan sites is <http://www.elmoro4life.com>, a further sign of the globalization and expansion of the term's denotation. In this vein, I will analyze aspects of the group's 2003 album *Bread and Barrels of Water*, highlighted by an in-depth discussion of the imagery used in the widely distributed music video for the song "Walou" (Arabic for "nothing").

From the outset, the name of the album makes a direct reference to the process of immigration and movement, much like Abd Al-Malik's *Gibraltar*. The title *Bread and Barrels of Water* clearly alludes to the physical necessities and lack encountered when crossing the Sahara desert and then the Strait of Gibraltar. The tracks included in the album then delve into the emotional and social ramifications of being a *moro* in Europe, while highlighting the conditions of the "sending countries" that brought the immigrants to Europe in the first place.

Indeed, one of the songs on the album, "El Moro," serves as a means to invert and simultaneously affirm the term, which has long held a negative connotation in Spain. The song proclaims the universality of the term; the artists themselves are "outland" moors. By announcing themselves as *moros*, the group members create a positive association with the name. A framework of struggle and transformation is immediately laid out, as is a context that is inclusive of religious affiliation. The usage of the word

“outland” incorporates the paradox of European Muslim identity, as “outland” would imply an outsider, landless status while the *moro* designation points to that which was present in, was excluded from, and is returning to Spain and Europe at large. The term *moro* is found to be relevant and inclusive by all the members of the group, despite the fact that they are of Pakistani, Moroccan, and Cuban/Honduran descent, respectively. Here we begin to see the molding of the term *moro* into a positive *affiliation* rather than a denomination that is assigned to a particular religious or ethnic group.

The rejection of *moro* as an imposed term and the embracing of it as a chosen designation are significant. Despite the varied backgrounds of the members of Outlandish, they all (re)inscribe the meaning of and affiliate with the *moro* denomination. As Taieb Belghazi notes,

Networks free individuals. They are more affiliative than filiative. They involve a measure of choice that implies agency. A networked approach to Islam reveals Islamic identity as a crossroads rather than an island, a construction rather than an essence. Nowhere is this more evident than in the perception of an Islamic *umma*. Traditionally perceived as a unified, homogeneous community, the notion of *umma* has always occluded rifts and contradictions and has been unlinked from any idea of travel and movement. This conservative view of the *umma* is undermined by the various contributors, who perceive the *umma* as mobile and malleable, as the context for Muslim networks, not their antithesis. (277)

The word *moro* is simultaneously neutralized and internationalized, as it is applied to and adopted by those without direct connection to Spain. The term *moro*, which envelops and includes notions of travel and displacement, is a perfect vehicle by which to begin constructing an Islamic *umma* based on the notion of immigration and re-rooting. The denomination of *moro* and the historical weight that it carries become a means by which to articulate a new sort of *umma* that transcends language and citizenship. If traditional notions of the *umma* have “always occluded rifts and

contradictions” and been “unlinked from any idea of travel and movement,” the proclaiming of *moro* as an affiliative marker of identity opens the doors for a circulatory, transnational view of being a Muslim in Europe and of multiple belongings.

These multiple belongings extend to claiming kinship among diverse and disperse “outsider” communities under the banner of the *moro*. Indeed, Outlandish’s artistic production appears to undertake a process of re-routing, whereby the path to self-identity and national or group belonging do not take linear routes. *Moro* identity may trace itself back to Al-Andalus and the high point of Arab civilization in Spain, but its appeal reaches far beyond the Iberian Peninsula. The song “El Moro” consistently references Muslim communities across the world, including those in Baghdad, the West Bank, and elsewhere, bringing them all under the banner of the term. They create transnational music that roots itself in interstitial spaces, simultaneously belonging nowhere and everywhere. It is the melody of the *traslado* experience.

The refashioning of *moro* identity and of the *umma* is further developed by the inclusion of Lenny, the Cuban/Honduran member of the group. He is the only non-Muslim member of the cohort and the only one of the rappers not born in Denmark. Yet he too feels an affinity for the *moro* identity and the hip-hop *umma* despite the fact that he does not follow Islam. The manner in which Lenny builds a case for what part of *moorishness* he will claim arises from a reference he makes in the song to the Spanish literary legacy, proclaiming himself as a continuation of the Quixote line by referencing the protagonist of Cervantes’s masterpiece, *Don Quixote*. Miguel de Cervantes, viewed as the foremost exponent of the Hispanic written tradition par excellence, is also an author who included the Moors, “Moorishness,” and Arab characters in his masterpiece, *Don Quixote*.²¹ The character of Don Quixote is a traveler, a bohemian, a seeker of knowledge, bound to nothing but his own (insane) quest for truth. Yet his character is honest and adventurous, a master of linguistic double entendre

(just as Outlandish manages dual belongings), who sees the *moros* as his brethren. Notably, his story is told through an invented Moorish chronicler named Cide Hamete Benengeli. As a Latin American, Lenny Martínez proposes in his Spanish-language contribution to the “El Moro” song that even those who can claim a Hispanic or “Castilian” cultural heritage (whether re-routed through imperial colonization or not) are in fact claiming a history that is underwritten by the Moorish presence. In this manner, Outlandish claims and vindicates the term *moro*, deconstructing Spanish cultural history in much the same way that Abd Al-Malik does French philosophy.

The emphasis on Spain and *el moro* as a focal point of transnational Islam and immigrant identity is further explored in the music video of Outlandish’s song “Walou,” which translates to “Nothing” in Arabic. The track, which blends English, Spanish, and Arabic, is one of the relatively few Outlandish songs to have been made into an official music video. The video both tells and represents the story of a Moroccan boy’s journey to Spain over the Strait of Gibraltar. The immigrant-centered clip relates a clear narrative and may be viewed as a short film. It begins with a boy in Morocco being brought home to his mother by police officers after having been embroiled in a scuffle he was attempting to defuse. The young man begs his tired-looking mother to not tell his father, who is implied to be working hard to support the family. The distraught boy retreats to his room, where the camera lens shifts to a worn map of Spain and Morocco on the boy’s wall. The boy gazes wordlessly at the port of Tangier. Immediately, the viewer is introduced to the economic hardship faced by the boy and his family, and “crossing over” is implied as the boy’s future recourse. We then see images of the boy and his friends hustling cigarettes on the streets to get by, while the chorus repeats the word *walou*.

Next, the boy looks up at the sky, and it is clear that he intends to make something from *walou* by migrating, though he is clearly

afraid. He is soon shown taking a picture of his mother with him and furtively peeking into her room while she sleeps. Looking uncertain, the boy sneaks out of his home. The shots of the boy's story appear simultaneous to a series of flashbacks and are interspersed with scenes of the Outlandish members rapping in front of walls written over in Arabic or writing phrases from the Quran and the Hadiths (sayings of the Prophet Muhammad written down by others) on clear glass walls. The Hadith "Paradise is under mama's feet," written in English, soon weaves its way across the screen, and it becomes evident that the boy is fleeing his home in order to attempt to help his mother escape poverty. Here we see a humanizing portrait of a young immigrant. Despite the namelessness of the young man, his plight is made intimate and immediate through his obvious attachments to his family and the vulnerability of his age. The repetition of the word *walou* reinforces the notion that when there is little to be had, there is little left to lose, giving further context to the boy's decision to cross the Strait of Gibraltar. The constant references to the Quran are also of note, as Islam is ever-present and is also presented as that which is crossing over and making the journey along with the immigrants.

Subsequently, two boys are shown scrambling through to the shoreline in the golden light of dawn. The desperation of the situation is highlighted, while Islam and faith in general remain an undercurrent of strength for the boy. The members of Outlandish continue to draw on the clear board in bold black marker, this time scrawling religiously neutral words of inspiration such as "Patience" and "Virtue." It is assumed that these are the values that the immigrant must have in order to survive and persevere through his perilous journey. The music video's young protagonist is then seen walking toward the shore with his friend, who pats him on the back and wishes him luck. The friend looks on while the boy struggles to swim and to hook himself onto a passing European cruise ship. After a few tense seconds during which the boy appears to be drowning, he eventually collapses, exhausted

but alive, onto a beach with nothing but the soaked clothes on his back. The image is overlaid with that of a dirty and empty water bottle rolling onto the shore, alluding to the boy's uncertain future and disposability as an illegal immigrant. His mother awakens, not yet knowing that her son has departed, while the viewer is also left in limbo: it is not determined whether the boy has landed back on the coast of Morocco, or if he has managed to cross into Spain, just as the song closes with the word *walou*. The young Moroccan boy has attempted the *traslado* and brought his memories and faith with him, but it remains unclear what has or will become of him.

In keeping with the concept of the *traslado*, Outlandish chose to create a video that would be easily accessible, available on YouTube and other free media websites. There was a clear desire on the part of the group that the Moroccan experience of crossing over to Europe be reviewed and disseminated widely or in a sense universalized. The experience of Moroccans going to Spain is seen as somehow representative of the whole of Muslim immigrants in Europe. What is confined to the Strait of Gibraltar thereby becomes "the local" elsewhere in Europe. As Nicolas Abercrombie and Brian Longhurst point out, "Diffused audiences are both local and global, local in actual performance, global in that imagination—not restricted in space and time—is a crucial resource in the performance. Performances for diffused audiences are public and private. Indeed, they erode the difference between the two" (76). By creating a video that can be seen publicly and privately, may be easily re-viewed, and is readily available, Outlandish encourages the blurring of the private and the public as well as the foreign and the local. The choice to create a visual medium with a clear musical narrative is reminiscent of the project undertaken by the film *Raval, Raval*, while also implying a desire for the song to be assimilated even by those who do not speak any of the languages employed in the lyrics. This *rapprochement* succeeds in making the crossing of the strait familiar and relevant even to those who may never physically

experience it. The Strait of Gibraltar is, as it was in the work of Abd Al-Malik, proposed as a site that interconnects and diffuses the *traslado* experience of the *moro* beyond Spain. Here again, the legacy of the *moro* and the continuous crossing to Spain is depicted as evocative of a more universal immigrant experience. Even for a Denmark-based rap group, the Strait of Gibraltar and Spain are imagined as the space of possibility in which Africa, Islam, and Europe may coincide.

Conclusion

As the Barcelona-based musical film *Raval, Raval*, the hip-hop deconstructions of Abd Al-Malik, the transnationalism of Moorishness represented by La Caution and DAM, and the rap group Outlandish's reclaiming of *moro* have demonstrated, Spain is now functioning as a cultural axis by which primarily Muslim immigrants are recreating a European identity based on a shared immigration experience. These artists have utilized music and visuals as a means by which to articulate an identity that bypasses traditional conceptualizations of citizenship and nationhood or even of religious adherence. Their musical and lyrical output places Spain in the intriguing position of point of both departure and crossover through which the "Oriental" or the "African" carves out a space of belonging in Europe. As Myria Georgiou proposes,

In space, copresence and absences, participation and exclusion, as well as access, control, and restrictions to economic and cultural resources—including communications technologies, media, and network infrastructure—become both tools and contexts for constructing identities and for imagining communities. People experience the world from particular places and in the context of specific spaces. Places become nodes and spaces become contexts for drawing geographical and symbolic boundaries of *we*-ness and otherness, for experiencing, remembering, imagining placement and displacement, for living the pains of deterritorialization, the promises of mobility and the opportunities and exclusions that come with [re]settlement . . . The social interaction and communication within

the diasporic communities, among dispersed sections of the same diaspora and beyond the limits of a diasporic community, all take place in space. Some of these spaces—also defined as ethnoscapas and mediaspaces by Appadurai (1990, 1996)—are grounded in very specific places, such as the neighborhood, whereas others exist virtually and in nonplaces. (5)

Increasingly, subjectivities are being accessed and developed as a direct result of experiences of deterritorialization. The film *Raval*, *Raval* focuses on music as the result of “copresences and absences,” positing the Raval (and by extension, the city of Barcelona and the country of Spain) as a place that has become a “node.” Music as discourse seizes the branching intersections of this “node,” claiming the space and delineating the context by which “symbolic boundaries of *we*-ness and otherness” are retraced. Spain emerges as a particularly fertile point at which to reassess the meaning and boundaries of “Europeanness,” as it is geographically and historically intertwined with Africa and Islam and has long been a site of constant transit. Spain is also relatively new to its full “European” designation, precisely due to its historical interpolations and its period under dictatorship.

Muslim and Arab immigrant artists in other parts of Europe have seized upon Spain as a site through which European belongings can be re-routed. Rapper Abd Al-Malik claims the historical legacy of Gibraltar in his deconstruction of French philosophy, while the group Outlandish disarms and then proclaims the loaded designation of *moro* as applicable to Muslims and “others” all over Europe. The immigrant “mediaspace” is undertaking a dual process of *traslado*: immigrants are transforming Europe and Europe is transforming its immigrants. In this manner, music and performance affirm Spain’s “Europeanness” via its Muslim and Moroccan immigrant flow, while immigrants stake their claim on European belonging based on Spain as a keeper of a Muslim European legacy. This may be simultaneously expanding and challenging the definition of the transnational *umma*, as both immigrants who adhere to Islam and those who do not begin to

claim Moorish identity through different routes of historical “kinship” tracing back to Spain.

Ever more often, European identity is finding itself mediated through the crossing-space of Spain and the ever-narrowing Strait of Gibraltar. As “Moorishness” is more widely appropriated as a marker of identity for migrants who may or may not already practice Islam (a good example is Lenny from *Outlandish*, who is not a practicing Muslim but still claims *moro* as an identifier, thus demonstrating the appeal of “Moorishness”),²² it will be interesting to see in the future how the *traslado* idea, centered upon/circulating about the Strait of Gibraltar, will continue to be incorporated into dialogues on immigration and Arab transnationalism elsewhere. Indeed, Al-Andalus has already been modernized and turned from past history into present legacy. Rather than be relegated to a near-mythical status of the past, immigrants are reviving the Muslim history of Spain and invoking it as something that is present. Moreover, they are recasting it not only as something that belongs to Spain but also as something that is European as a whole and also belongs to them.

Conclusion

As the works from the previous chapters have demonstrated, the current rise in North African immigration to Spain and Europe at large has sparked a renewed interest in Al-Andalus as a cultural identity trope. For Spaniards, the arrival of the familiar, intimate Moorish “foe” has caused renewed political and societal wrangling as to what constitutes Spanish identity. Adding to the complexities is Spain’s present goal of allying itself more closely with “classical” Europe. Arguably, however, Spain’s fears of its “Africanized” heritage once again distancing it from “old Europe” may this time be unfounded, as its immigrant flows are placing it squarely in the middle of what has become a very European debate on origins, roots, and citizenship.

Yet what sets Spain apart, and what may be of interest to the rest of Europe at this time of massive movement of peoples and regular cross-cultural encounters, is the mode by which Spain’s history of Al-Andalus is being recast as living history. Rather than being viewed as a bygone era whose relevance has long since passed, Al-Andalus and the presence of Islam on the Iberian Peninsula are being invoked by immigrant authors and artists in present terms, thereby establishing a continuity and a legitimacy for Islam in today’s Europe. If Spain is now in the process of establishing its belonging in Europe, immigrants are using that trajectory as an entrée by which to also claim entry to a wider European cultural tradition. Interestingly, this is not done through the notion of claiming place but rather by claiming placelessness, where Al-Andalus and Moorishness are points

of departure and not sites of arrival or destination. The name *moro* itself, a denominator so long used in Spain as a means by which to deny individual identity or to establish an ethnic hierarchy, is now being vindicated, reclaimed, given nuance, and transnationalized.

Critical to the term *traslado* is the insistence upon recirculating, moving, and recasting (in a variety of languages) as a means by which to translate or transfer cultural identity. As opposed to the commonly used terms “translation” and “transculturation,”¹ the *traslado* implies a lateral move that attempts to preserve the legacies of languages and cultures, not place them in competition. While the *traslado* may at times employ a translation, its objective is not a transculturation but rather a mixing of constitutive elements that requires some participation and deciphering on the part of the intended audience. Outlandish’s “Walou” video, for example, features lyrics in English, Arabic, and Spanish. Writing in the video appears in English, Spanish, and Arabic as well. The video is salient to a number of audiences and is not intended to fit into a single national identity spectrum. *Traslado* as a term fits this cultural approach uniquely well in that it encompasses both language and space and is able to address not only the movement and relocation of persons but also the continuous processes of linguistic and cultural transition, reformulation, translation, and dislocation that accompany migration. The word also reinforces a sense of familiarity, a shared past, and the (un)comfortable sameness that categorizes transit between Spain and Morocco. Moreover, the term *traslado* is colloquially used in Spain to refer to the deportation of illegal immigrants, a highly useful and topical referent.

It is within this context of changing referents that the Hispano-Moroccan relationship must be examined. Upon concluding this study, I found that what was being transformed here was more than just the immigrant subject; rather it is Spain and Europe as a whole that are being transformed via a reiteration of their

Moorish heritage. Rather than viewing Al-Andalus as a referent for European “otherness,” in contemporary times it may be reexamined as a point of departure by which to launch new European, new Moorish, and new European Islamic identities. In tracing the re-routing of Moorishness, this study has integrated many areas of postcolonial, gender, and border studies, ultimately proposing a wider cross-reading of texts that reflects today’s increasingly transnational immigrant subjectivities. In addition, this study has touched upon the complexities of Mediterranean identities, in the end suggesting that it is this region that will eventually come to determine what the rest of Europe looks and sounds like. Mediterranean Studies are now, more than ever, European Studies. I propose a shifting of this definition to more intimately encompass the southern coast of the Mediterranean Sea, in addition to the northern countries.²

Driving this shift in the scope of Mediterranean Studies is the *traslado*. The *traslado*, as a theoretical and narrative device, implies that what goes in one direction also goes in the other. So it is of particular note that the transnationalization of European immigrant identity is also traversing the Mediterranean in the opposite direction, where the designation *moro* is now claimed by native Moroccans, many of whom have never been on Spanish soil. As Driessen points out,

Mediterranean Morocco has been a forgotten frontier for centuries. The dominant image of this area in the rest of Morocco, especially in the Atlantic plains, is one of poverty, smuggling, *kif*, cut-throats, emigration, and subordination . . . But the category “Mediterranean” is now also being used in a positive sense by an increasing number of young people in northern Morocco (and Rifians abroad), particularly those who are aware of and profess their Berber identity. These people employ “Mediterranean” as a category of opposition to Arab domination. Some of them even celebrate the term *moro* as an honorary nickname in order to avoid the term “Muslim” and its close association with Arab identity. Since many of the Rif Berbers are connected to Europe rather than Rabat,

especially economically, they primarily present themselves as Berbers and Mediterranean rather than as Moroccans or Muslims. (110)

Intriguingly, the term *moro* appears to also now be migrating back to Morocco, where it is being claimed as an identity marker against perceived oppression within Morocco itself. The term *moro* is thereby increasingly becoming not only a way to tie Spain into Europe but also a way to bring Morocco deeper into the fold of the Mediterranean. In the future, I believe that Morocco and other North African nations will be studied and included within Mediterranean Studies to the extent that Greece, Italy, Spain, and southern France have been. In addition, the migratory flows of nations studied under the banner of so-called Mediterranean Studies will themselves make an impact ever northward, marking the crossroads at which Europe as a whole must decide who and what is (and who and what is not) ultimately European.

The *traslado* also encourages reading across (and in between) regional and thematic area studies. Within postcolonial and border studies, there exists a well-established corpus of dynamic criticism and literature with regards to transit, crossings, dual identities, and sexuality, much of which has rarely (if ever) been read in concert with North African, Latin American, and European writings, especially not in a unifying manner. Yet, to be sure, great parallels exist, and one of the major goals of this study was to trace how the increasing movement of immigrants from Morocco to Spain and elsewhere in Europe was, and is, creating global and transnational identities that make it necessary and fruitful to intersect different disciplines. Therefore, in addition to citing widely used theory such as that of Gayatri Spivak, Judith Butler, and Doris Sommer, I have also employed theory and criticism by authors such as Nestor García Canclini (*Hybrid Cultures: Strategies for Entering and Leaving Modernity*) and Walter D. Mignolo (*Local Histories/*

Global Designs), cultural critics typically used in Latin American studies, and cross referenced them with Aimé Césaire and Frantz Fanon of Francophone Studies, Abdelkhébir Khatibi of North African Studies, and Gloria Anzaldúa of Chicano Studies. I employ this methodology because I believe these writings are all connected through the concept of the *traslado*. While (post) colonial experiences are unique by region and country, studies of the immigrant dynamic globally would benefit immensely from greater dialogue and communication among and between disciplines. Certainly, immigrants from Latin America and the Caribbean are living side-by-side with African, Middle Eastern, and Muslim immigrants in urban spheres, mingling and creating interwoven communities, all while having parallel and crisscrossing experiences of transit. When analyzing the texts in this study, I was looking to build bridges not just between Morocco and Spain but also between disciplines and modes of reading. This is especially crucial given recent revolutions in the Middle East and North Africa,³ as postcolonial experiences of democratization begin to mirror one another more and more.

Looking forward, the global *umma* of Muslim believers may now be juxtaposed with an *umma* of a different type: one that comprises unwanted immigrant “others” irrespective of faith, whose imminent expulsion recalls that of 1492. Anouar Majid has already begun proposing what could be called a “transatlantic Moorishness” when he recalls his impressions of US border policy in his aptly named *We Are All Moors*:

The [*New York Times*] reader’s pictures of the logistics involved and the impact on the deportees and the society at large is eerily reminiscent of the periodic persecutions visited on the Moors in 1492. The more I listened to the acrimonious dispute over the fate of illegal aliens in the United States, the more I realized the extent to which modern Western nations are still operating by the principles of Spanish conquistadors and inquisitors in the war against Islam. Spain’s crusade for religious purity

was not a blessing to that nation, but the delusion that a nation could regain its strength by excluding those who are different. (19)

Here Majid astutely notes that the echoes of Spanish Moorishness are not only resonating in Spain but also becoming increasingly meaningful relative to immigrant dynamics worldwide. While the backlash against immigrants is a globalized phenomenon and the reclaiming of “Moor” as a term is leading to a transnationalization of the Spanish Andalusian legacy, Spain’s role in forging a new immigrant identity is now leading beyond the epistemic. As a gatekeeper to Europe that is also a passageway to Africa, Spain has at this point in history allowed for immigrants to participate in the dialogue of exclusion in a way that they never could before. Spain has provided the *route* to follow by which immigrants can then choose where and how to spread their roots. The advent of forms of media and communication that allow for “Moorishness” across borders has replicated a new kind of “Spanishness” that is more inclusive, thereby challenging prevailing attitudes of “Europeanness” to do the same.

In this challenge to redefine *routes* versus *roots*, I see the necessity to continue to examine human and cultural transit in the Mediterranean sphere with exchanges taking place on the US-Mexican border. In the chapter “Memory, Return, and the ‘Other Side,’” I charted a new direction in border theory by incorporating border studies familiar to Latino Studies but not often applied to North African studies, such as Gloria Anzaldúa’s classic *The Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza*. While Anzaldúa speaks of the US-Mexican border, her insistence upon a constant state of crossover, a sense of altered awareness of self, and the spiritual renewal necessary for survival is equally germane to the ragged edges delimiting Morocco and Spain. The migrant subject, be it Anzaldúa’s Chicana/o or be it the Moroccan entering Spain, embodies and incarnates the *traslado*, constantly reinterpreting themselves and evolving in their environment. If the *traslado* is to

be seen as a global phenomenon, discourses surrounding “native return” will be applicable to immigration studies across the globe as immigrants continue to draw upon reclaimed histories to validate their multiple belongings in the present.

Indeed, while Morocco and the US-Mexican border are geographically and historically very different, Anzaldúa’s concepts of cleansing, returning, rebirth, and the vindication of faith at the border are recognizable at both crossings. Nostalgic narratives of Al-Andalus are now being used to demonstrate how Moroccan immigration is reflective of a globalized migratory dynamic that not only allows for but invites the blending of fields and areas of study. I believe that this is the future direction of postcolonial studies, as the urban metropolises of Europe continue to house immigrants whose subject-positions come from all over the world and as the circles of political science begin to increasingly compare the political situations of the Maghreb and Latin America to each other. The toppling regimes of the Middle East/North Africa region in recent history (beginning in February 2011) mirror the fall of dictatorships during the second half of the twentieth century in Latin America, and it is only a matter time before their causes and results may be analyzed in concert.

Beyond the blending and bending of regional disciplines, the *traslado* also requires a rearticulation of established postcolonial theories in light of transnationalized identities. The application of Doris Sommer’s *Foundational Fictions* (1991)—which proposes that “national romances” serve to help the nation idealize and project itself via its intimate, sanctioned, “legal” relationships—does not account for immigration, which can subvert or altogether re-route the “romance.” The traditional “romance” as expressed by Sommer is also destabilized when the acting agent is female or when (hetero)sexuality and gender roles are reversed or put into question. The “classic” paradigm fragments as soon as heteronormativity is questioned. Many immigrants’ reliance on trading sex

or bending traditional definitions of gender dynamics in order to cross the border or stay in the destination country challenges both Moroccan and Spanish concepts of masculinity, intimacy, and faith and brings into play Judith Butler's theory of performative gender as a survival tactic, Marjorie Garber's definition of sexuality as a shifting Möbius strip, and sexuality and intimacy as that which is now circumventing the "official" parameters of national belonging rather than enforcing them. The *traslado* also questions writers such as Spivak, whose classic "Can the Subaltern Speak?" proposes that it is the duty of the engaged and intellectual woman to speak for the rural and uneducated woman, for she is silent. As the women in *L'enfant endormi* demonstrate, they are not silent. The question of who hears and whose responsibility it is to hear the subaltern, as opposed to speak for them, is one that remains unanswered.

How these new modes of connection are being realized and put into dialogue artistically became the crux of my final chapter, "*Europe via Spain: Media, Islam, and the Sounds of Immigrant Identity*." Film, music, and digital media are forming a locus of a new Europeanness, one that is reshaping nationhood and identity through the prism of immigration. The Catalan film *Raval, Raval*, the work of Franco-Congolese rapper Abd Al-Malik, the collaboration between La Caution and DAM, and the music of Danish hip-hop group Outlandish use these modes of cultural production as a means by which to interplay with written texts and to create a new discursive space that is bound by the immigrant experience rather than by national affiliation, thereby inserting the immigrant into the dialogue on European identity and belonging. Immigrants are now participating in the creation of a historical discourse, rather than being at the margins of it. By revisiting Spanish history, these media "texts" propose Islam as a European religion, legitimizing and "Europeanizing" its practice.

Indeed, the (re)claiming of *moro* by groups who are not Moroccan, Muslim, or Arab opens up a world of new possibilities in Ethnic Studies. Rather than study or analyze groups by blood or national affiliations, we are now seeing the creation of new legacies and “ethnicities” based on links created long ago (in this case Al-Andalus) that are being revived and reactivated at a time of maximum social and political instability. Bypassing national identities and citizenship affiliations entirely, these new “ethnic” and postcolonial affiliations deploy so many disciplines—Francophone Studies, Islamic Studies, Border Studies, Gender Studies—that they disallow any compartmentalization and neat separation of areas and require a whole new level of interdisciplinarity.

In addition to ethnic and literary theory, the new machinations of identity and cultural production also demand an opening-up of literary studies to include different forms of media. Because much of the work analyzed was media driven, this study required some musicology and theories on mass media in order to adequately address the subject matter. I employed Murray R. Schafer’s term “soundscape” to describe the topography of sound that defines immigrant areas of Europe. I privileged sound and music in my analysis because, much like the immigrant subject, music travels and circulates widely. It is also often more easily available than texts, and a single song may include several languages, thus widening the audience and responding to class differences in accessibility. When it came to lyrics, I chose to analyze them as literary texts while placing careful attention to their musical style and historical context and release date, all of which are relevant when talking of Muslim and Arab immigration following 9/11 in the United States and March 11, 2004, in Spain. These details are important, as they illustrate a transformation in not only what constitutes literature and artistic production but also the difficulties and innovations required in order to analyze and critique media-driven cultural output that

is rapidly and constantly shifting. The book as a cultural artifact may become an increasingly difficult indicator of where culture is moving, precisely because it needs to be printed, carried, and purchased, which requires “official” channels, authorization, money, and time.

The importance of mass media, music, and hip-hop in particular in creating our future understanding of immigrant communities and the reshaping of nationhood cannot be underestimated. Music has always had the power to create powerful cultural bonds, to evoke feelings and nostalgia, or to recreate “home” in a place of “otherness.” Yet, in the hip-hop by Abd al-Malik, La Caution, DAM, and Outlandish, the music is also used to denounce stereotypes, to deconstruct paradigms, to express faith (or create distance from it), and to rebuild a concept of self and identity. While the music holds a beat and is entertaining, what is of greater note here is its power as a tool of community formation beyond national borders as well as its attempt to present Islam in a way that is contrary to the generally negative opinion held by the “West.” Notably, secularly oriented groups such as DAM are also employing music not to espouse a vision of Islam at all but to reinforce or contest politicized Arab identities. The use of mass media is also arguably just beginning to fulfill its potential as a unifying element for transnationalized communities.

For example, during the North African and Middle Eastern revolutions (popularly termed “the Arab Spring”) that began in 2011, the theme song for the Tunisian protests that toppled President Zine el Abidine Ben Ali was “Rais Lebled” (Head of State), a song by a young rapper named El Général. The song, which accused the government of corruption and encouraged the people to rise up, went viral and was adopted by protesters in neighboring Algeria, Libya, and Egypt, among others. El Général’s piece was later joined by songs produced by Arab or Muslim artists living in the West, who voiced their support for the revolution

through songs such as “January 25th,” created by Syrian American Omar Offendum, Iraqi-Canadian the Narcicyst, MC Free-way, Palestinian-Canadian vocalist Ayah, Amir Sulaiman, and producer Sami Matar. Offendum raps,

I heard 'em say
 The revolution won't be televised
 Aljazeera proved 'em wrong
 Twitter has him paralyzed
 80 million strong
 And ain't no longer gonna be terrorized
 Organized—Mobilized—Vocalized
 On the side of TRUTH
 Um il-Dunya's living proof
 That it's a matter of time
 before the chicken is home to roost
 Bouazizi lit the . . .
 and it slowly ignited the fire
 within Arab people to fight it . . .

“Organized, mobilized, and vocalized,” Arab as well as Muslim identities are undergoing a powerful rebirth both on European soil and in the Middle East and North Africa. The song “January 25th” is a multinational effort between artists of varied backgrounds and nationalities, many of whom claim “hyphenated” identities, reflecting the transnational nature of popular culture and highlighting the potential of hip-hop as a discursive vehicle. Hip-hop, therefore, presents a valid avenue by which to analyze the zeitgeist and cultural output of an increasingly globalized community, particularly its youth. When examining cultural production, we must now recognize that the messages, imagery, and poetry we seek as critics are not emerging simply from novels but from digital, visual, and musical sources as well. In this way, media studies must become integrated into literary studies, which must in turn be examined through the prism of cultural studies. I believe we are witnessing the *traslado* of academia itself.

In Arabic, the word *sāfir* means “travel” or “one who travels.” The Quran and Hadiths explicitly encourage the seeking of knowledge through travel and exploration. Seen in this context, the process of *traslado* and the transnationalization of Moorishness appears an appropriate next step in the continuing legacy of Al-Andalus and an apropos redefinition of the meaning of the “West” as it has long been characterized by “classical” European nations. The *traslado* is also a useful device to bridge disciplines, modes of cultural production, and theoretical approaches. As immigration continues to narrow the Strait of Gibraltar’s tenuous division between Morocco and Mediterranean Europe, the strait and its history actually begin to function as a conduit by which Africa becomes more European and Europe becomes more African. Rather than function as a separator of peoples and nations, the strait functions as mirror and funnel. As the geographical and historical bridge for this flow, Spain has become the axis by which Europe is testing its boundaries and the limits of its national and ethnic identities. In the end, it may be the *moro*, the figure inscribed by crossings and *travesías*, that re-routes where Europe’s roots begin and where they will lead.

Notes

Introduction

1. Cesar Vidal's *España frente al Islam: De Mahoma a Ben Laden* traces the shared histories and alternate occupation(s) of Morocco and Spain from 711 onward as well as the ever-present role of Islam in Spanish-Moroccan relations.
2. Please note that portions of the Introduction and Chapter 1 were previously published. See Lara N. Dotson-Renta, "Translated Identities: Writing between Morocco and Spain," *Journal of North African Studies* 13.4 (2008): 429–39.
3. For more on the participation of Moroccans in the Spanish Civil War, see *Los moros que trajo Franco: La intervención de tropas coloniales en la Guerra Civil española* by María Rosa de Madariaga.
4. The Maghreb, also known as the Maghrib, is primarily used to refer collectively to the five North African countries of Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria, Libya, and Mauritania. This may also include the disputed territory of the Western Sahara.
5. It should be noted that Spain still claims the territories of Ceuta, Melilla, and the small, uninhabited island of Perejil (known as Laila to Moroccans), while also claiming sovereignty over British-occupied Gibraltar.
6. Spain's ascent has been threatened as it confronts the global economic crisis. The crisis has resulted in especially high unemployment rates among immigrants, which has in turn led to increasing anti-immigration sentiment among Spaniards. Recent studies have shown that proportionally, more immigrants in Spain are now unemployed than elsewhere in Europe. See Robert Plummer, "Migrants Feel Recession Aftermath," *BBC News*, 7 Oct. 2010, accessed 18 Jan. 2012, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-11295139>.
7. According to its website, "La Exposición Universal de Sevilla" was visited by more than twenty million people in 1992. Accessed 18 Jan. 2012, <http://www.expo92.es/principal/index.php>.
8. Spain's financial stability, tied to the euro, has taken a sharp downward turn amid global economic unrest. Despite many economic gains since the time of Franco, Spain's debts threaten its place within the Eurozone as of June 2012. For more on the continuing economic crisis in Europe, please

see the BBC's "Timeline of the Unfolding Debt Crisis," accessed 20 June 2012, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-13856580>.

9. All translations are my own, unless otherwise noted.
10. It is worth observing that the socioeconomic disparity and migratory patterns are mirrored by other borders around the world, most notably the increasingly patrolled Mexican-US border, the border between Mexico and Guatemala, and the historically bloody frontier between Haiti and the Dominican Republic, the site of the massacre of approximately thirty thousand Haitians on the orders of Dominican dictator Rafael Trujillo in 1937. While these borders are mainly transgressed for economic reasons, the racial and ethnic tensions created or reflected by these crossings are also undeniable.
11. When I employ the term *globalization*, I intend to use it not as a term that implies the "smoothing over" of regional differences but rather as a social and economic reality of movements and flows that often exposes the fractures and inequities in increasingly interconnected commoditized systems of exchange. As Douglas Kellner notes, "Globalization links people together and brings new commonalities into experience just as it differentiates them and produces new inequalities. Likewise, while it connects and brings into global networks parts of the world that were isolated and cut off, it ignores and bypasses other regions. The events disclose explosive contradictions and conflicts at the heart of globalization and that the technologies of information, communication, and transportation that facilitate globalization can also be used to undermine and attack it and generate instruments of destruction as well as production . . . The 9/11 terror attacks also call attention to the complex and unpredictable nature of a globally connected networked society of paradoxes, surprises, and unintended consequences that flow from the multidimensional processes of globalization" (53, 63).
12. *El diccionario de la Real Academia española*, s.v. "trasladar," accessed 18 Jan. 2012, <http://www.rae.es>.
13. This unease with regard to the perceived threat of globalized Islam is reflected in the whole of Europe. For more on Islam in European culture and politics, see Robert J. Pauly Jr., *Islam in Europe: Integration or Marginalization?*, and Yunas Samad and Kasturi Sen, eds., *Islam in the European Union: Transnationalism, Youth, and the War on Terror*.
14. For a cogent analysis of the relationship between colonial migrants, the construction of ethnicity, and the *métropole*, see Ramón Grosfoguel's book on geopolitics and coloniality of power with regards to Caribbean colonial migrants: *Colonial Subjects: Puerto Ricans in a Global Perspective*.
15. Here Alexander cites Peter McLaren's "The Dialectics of Terrorism: A Marxist Response to September 11."

16. For more on *convivencia*, or the concept of a period of relative coexistence between Islam, Christianity, and Judaism in Andalusian Spain, see Américo Castro, *España en su historia: Cristianos, moros y judíos*. Also pertinent is *The Ornament of the World: How Muslims, Jews, and Christians Created a Culture of Tolerance in Medieval Spain* by María Rosa Menocal.

Chapter 1

1. This is particularly important for Morocco, whose unequal access to the European arts market and significantly lower literacy rate place it at a disadvantage in matters of cultural exchange.
2. For more on this (in Spanish) please see Silvia Taulés, *La nueva España musulmana*.
3. Anthony Celso provides a jarring view of the current conundrum in his article "The Tragedy of Al-Andalus: The Madrid Terror Attacks and the Islamization of Spanish Politics": "The Madrid attacks changed the political landscape dramatically. The terrorist assault (thirteen cellphone-activated bombs on four commuter trains) resulted in 190 deaths and over 1500 wounded . . . the clustering of the new immigrants and the Islamist civil society being created in places like Ceuta, Melilla, Tarragona, and Almería threaten to create a potent fifth column compromising much of the Spanish state" (90, 100).
4. Also known as the Second Moroccan War, this conflict followed the Rif War of 1893. Having secured the areas surrounding Melilla and Ceuta through the Treaty of Fez in 1912, Spain (later aided by France) attempted to conquer more territory and suffered a crushing defeat in 1921 at the hands of Abd-el-Krim. After Spain and France utilized chemical weapons against the Rifian tribes, Spain reclaimed Spanish Morocco in 1926.
5. The constant processes of Spanish *remembering* that take place in these works recall Derrida's notions of spectrality and repetition in the construction of the nation. As he posits in *Specters of Marx* (trans. 1994), "Repetition *and* first time: this is perhaps the question of the event as question of the ghost. *What is a ghost?* What is the *effectivity* or the *presence* of a specter, that is, of what seems to remain as ineffective, virtual, insubstantial, as a simulacrum? Is there *there*, between the thing itself and its simulacrum, an opposition that holds up? Repetition *and* first time, but also repetition *and* last time, since the singularity of any *first time* makes of it also a *last time*. Each time is the event itself, a first time is a last time. Altogether together. Staging for the end of history. Let us call it a *hauntology*" (10). This paradoxical togetherness of past and present would mean that Spain is constantly experiencing its specters anew, for the specter of history is never gone.

6. Here the relationship between Spain and Morocco can be compared to the experience of the “uncanny” described by Sigmund Freud in *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1900), in which individuals or societies can experience a sense of duality stemming from something coexisting within the “selves” we know. This uneasy yet unavoidable recognition stems from what is repressed and thereby “unconscious” to the self.
7. According to Geraldine Harris in *Staging Femininities: Performance and Performativity*, “[A]ny sort of act or ‘movement’ within the theatrical frame or otherwise is already marked *as* double, already in quotation marks. This marking places a performance as belonging to a particular realm of discourse, which is governed by laws and conventions that may be similar to, but are not the same as, those that govern other spheres” (76). Thus the stage emerges as a “safe” space of creation.
8. Foucault approaches this distortion of reality in “Of Other Spaces,” published by *Diacritics* in the spring of 1986: “There are also, probably in every culture, in every civilization, real places—places that do exist and that are formed in the very founding of society—which are something like counter-sites, a kind of effectively enacted utopia in which the real sites, all the other real sites that can be found within the culture, are simultaneously represented, contested, and inverted. Places of this kind are outside of all places, even though it may be possible to indicate their location in reality” (24).
9. A similar experience of dehumanization in the crossing-space of the train was expressed by Frantz Fanon in his classic *Black Skin, White Masks* (trans. Charles Lam Markmann), in which the typically composed Martinican author and psychoanalyst is jarred by a white child on the metro who screams, “Mama, see the Negro! I’m frightened!” at him. Fanon writes of the incident, “I was responsible at the same time for my body, for my race, for my ancestors. I subjected myself to an objective examination, I discovered my blackness, my ethnic characteristics . . . On that day, completely *dislocated*, unable to be abroad with the other, the white man, who unmercifully imprisoned me, *I took myself far from my own presence, far indeed, and made myself an object*” (112–17). In the public and highly visible space of the train station, the “other” is made to feel anonymous and inhuman when receiving the gaze of those who claim sole belonging within the urban space.
10. See Abdelkébir Khatibi’s 1971 work on Moroccan postcolonial identity, *La mémoire tatouée* (*Tattooed Memory*).
11. Walter Mignolo further developed Abdelkébir Khatibi’s idea in *Local Histories/Global Designs: Coloniality, Subaltern Knowledges, and Border Thinking*. Here he states that “a double critique becomes at this intersection a border thinking, since to be critical of both, of Western and Islamic fundamentalism, implies to think of both traditions and, at the same time, from neither

of them. This border thinking and double critique are the necessary conditions for an 'other thinking,' a thinking that is no longer conceivable in Hegel's dialectics, but located at the border of colonality of power in the modern world system. Why? Because Hegel's dialectics presuppose a linear conception of historical development, whereas 'an other thinking' is based on the spatial confrontations between different concepts of history. Or, shall I say, 'an other thinking' is possible when different local histories and their particular power relations are taken into consideration" (67).

12. Outside of perhaps the field of anthropology, the (dis)continuities of the spiritual lives of immigrants have been subsumed within other, more "tangible" academic areas of study. Yet the role of spirituality is a crucial link in understanding processes of assimilation and identity formation. Arguably, it is Arab and African immigrants' visible adherence to Islam that has created the most conflict among European nationals and new arrivals.
13. For more on "Europeanness" and current debates on citizenship, please see Etienne Balibar, *We, the People of Europe: Reflections on Transnational Citizenship*.
14. Najat El Hachmi's rerouting of personal history does not come without its losses, ones that she anticipates her son will also one day experience. As Susan Martin-Márquez states in *Disorientations* (2008): "Similarly, El Hachmi's text ends with a painful loss that is not precisely experienced as such: when she learns that her beloved grandfather has died, she remains unaffected, coming to realize that for her he had already died when she left Morocco. Indeed, he had died over and over again, after the end of every three-week-and-two-day-long visit undertaken by her family. El Hachmi reflects on the inevitable series of deaths that will follow his, leaving her with nothing of Morocco. Or not quite nothing, as the last lines of her narrative indicate: 'The first eight years of life, the phone calls and the memories of three weeks and two days. Nothing more' [195]" (Martin-Márquez, 354). Memory and loss are represented as both repetitive and irrevocable.
15. Wahhabi Muslims strictly follow the teachings of Muhammad ibn Abd-al-Wahhab and follow a literal interpretation of the Quran. Wahhabism is an assertive and extremely restrictive form of Islam practiced in Saudi Arabia and other parts of the Gulf, and it is often linked to extreme beliefs with regards to the West. Many of its practices are not commonly recognized by other branches of Islam. For further reading, consult Mohammad Ayoub and Hasan Kosebalaban, eds., *Religion and Politics in Saudi Arabia: Wahhabism and the State*.
16. This idealized notion of returning to restore a lost past is not unique to the Hispano-Moroccan relationship. Gloria Anzaldúa refers to this in the case of Mexican indigenous peoples returning/migrating to what she terms the North American "homeland" in her versified "Arriba mi gente" (Rise, my people) in *Borderlands*: "Mi gente, despierta / limpia la Madre Tierra / Y

entre la llama púrpura / allí renaceremos / allí renaceremos . . . Retornará nuestra Antigua fe / y levantará el campo. / Arriba, despierten, mi gente/a liberar los pueblos.” (192, 195; My people, awaken / clean Mother Earth / And between the purple flame / there we will be reborn / there we will be reborn . . . Our ancestral faith will return / and raise up the fields / Up, awaken, my brethren/to liberate the people). This concept of cleansing, returning, rebirth, and the vindication of faith are recognizable with regards to nostalgic narratives of Al-Andalus and demonstrate how Moroccan immigration is also reflective of a globalized migratory dynamic.

17. For the article, see Irene Dalmases, “La joven escritora de origen marroquí Najat El Hachmi gana el Ramon Llull,” *El Mundo* 1 Feb. 2008, 18 Jan. 2012, <http://www.elmundo.es/elmundo/2008/01/31/cultura/1201810933.html>.
18. For more on the history of Islam in Spain, consult César Vidal, *España frente al Islam: De Mahoma a Ben Laden*.

Chapter 2

1. *Métissage* (French) or *mestizaje* (Spanish) refers to mixed-blood, but it is also commonly used to refer to the interspersing of cultures and intraethnic interactions, particularly among colonizing and colonized societies. In Spanish, *mestizaje* often carries the connotation of mixing involving native peoples. For more on *métissage* and *mestizaje*, see Sylvie Kandé, ed., *Discours sur le métissage, identités métisses: En quête d'Ariel*.
2. Doris Sommer proposes that these works can be read as a corpus of “foundational fictions” that represent marriage and fertile unions as possible answers to precarious nationalities: “The nineteenth-century national novels insist on simplifying the [love] triangle; they straighten and flatten it out into a dyad where no mediation is necessary or even possible for lovers who know they’re right for each other. Tensions that inevitably exist and drive the story on are external to the couple: the counterproductive social constraints that underlie the naturalness and the inevitability of the lovers’ transgressive desire. Triangulation is produced, then, in a strangely fecund rather than frustrating way, since the lovers must imagine their ideal relationship through an alternative society. Once they project that ideal as an image that looks like a wedding portrait, their union . . . becomes the mediating principle that urges the narrative forward like a promise . . . The coherence comes from their common project to build through reconciliations and amalgamations of national constituencies cast as lovers destined to desire each other. This produces a surprisingly consistent narrative form that is apparently adequate to a range of political positions; they are moved by the logic of love. Whether the plots end happily or not, the romances are invariably about desire in young chaste heroes for equally young and chaste heroines, the nations’ hope for productive unions” (18, 24).

3. Sexual violence at border crossings is well documented. A Médecins Sans Frontières (Doctors Without Borders) press release estimates that “[b]etween May 2009 and January 2010, one out of three women treated by MSF in Rabat and Casablanca admitted to having been subjected to one or more sexual attacks, either in their country of origin, on their journey, and/or in Morocco.”

A similar statement from Amnesty International estimates that 60 percent of women crossing the US-Mexican border also experience a sexual assault.

4. Here I refer to James Clifford's *Routes: Travel and Translation in the Late Twentieth Century* (1997), which proposes that “Diaspora is different from travel (though it works through travel practices) in that it is not temporary. It involves dwelling, maintaining communities, having collective homes away from home (and in this it is different from exile, with its frequently individualist focus). Diaspora discourse articulates, or bends together, both roots and routes to construct what Gilroy (1987) describes as alternate public spheres, forms of community consciousness and solidarity that maintain identifications outside the national time/space in order to live inside, with a difference. Diaspora cultures are not separatist, though they may have separatist or irredentist moments” (251). Throughout the novel, Ahmed seeks (and fails) to construct an “alternate public sphere” in which he may comfortably dwell.
5. The concept of race-based sexual jealousy is famously referenced in Frantz Fanon's *Black Skin, White Masks* (1952). In chapter 3 of his book, Fanon writes, “I marry white culture, white beauty, white whiteness. When my restless hands caress those white breasts, they grasp white civilization and dignity and make them mine” (63). Clearly, the association is that possessing someone of another race sexually also entails access to their culture and to a lesser degree, their social standing.
6. The Spanish female body as the symbol of the loss of the Spanish nation to the Moor was already embedded into Spanish cultural memory via cultural artifacts such as the anonymous seventeenth-century pastoral poem “Romance de la Cava Florinda.” In this poem, a beautiful naked maiden frolics in the water and is ravaged by King Rodrigo, who subsequently loses his kingdom to the Moorish invasion. The poem ends with “De la pérdida de España/ fue aquí funesto principio / una mujer sin ventura / y un hombre de amor rendido / Florinda perdió su flor / el rey padeció el castigo / ella dice que hubo fuerza/ él que gusto consentido/ Si dicen quien de los dos / la mayor culpa ha tenido/ digan los hombres la Cava/ y las mujeres Rodrigo.” (Of the loss of Spain / this was the wretched beginning / a woman without virtue / and a man given over to love / Florinda was deflowered / the King suffered punishment / as to who was the guiltiest of the two / the men say it was the Cava / and the women say Rodrigo.) The sovereignty and purity of Spain is hereby historically seen as feminized, its

loss having been the “fault” of the woman. Claudia becomes the modern-day Florinda Cava in the eyes of her classmates, “selling out” the virtue of the nation by having a relationship with the arriving “moor.”

7. For more on politicized womanhood in pre- and post-Franco Spain, please see Pamela Beth Radcliff, “Citizens and Housewives: The Problem of Female Citizenship in Spain’s Transition to Democracy.”
8. The women in Ahmed’s family make a few cursory appearances, usually to emphasize the differences between Claudia and Ahmed’s realities. When Claudia tries to find out where Ahmed is through his sister Nadia, she refuses to help because it is “a man’s affair.” Nadia then explains to Claudia, “Pues porque soy una mujer. Las mujeres marroquíes no tenemos derecho a estudiar; debemos ocuparnos de la casa, de la familia, de los hombres, ¿entiendes? . . . Es la costumbre entre los musulmanes. La mujer no tiene los mismos derechos que el hombre, por eso no puedo entrometerme en este asunto.” (154; Well because I am a woman. Moroccan women don’t have the right to study; we should take care of the home, the family, the men, do you understand? It’s the custom among Muslims. Women don’t have the same rights as men, so I can’t get involved in this issue.) While the author Manuel Valls effectively posits Claudia and Ahmed’s world as oppositional, he does so by including a generalization of the status of women that abides by the accepted European stereotype. While the author is attempting to open avenues of intercultural dialogue, he is doing so through discursive tropes that may be more comfortable and somewhat familiar to a presumably Spanish target audience.
9. Edward Said’s autobiography *Out of Place* (1999) tackles the sense of displacement and duality of the contemporary Arab subject: “And thus I became ‘Edward,’ a creation of my parents . . . his creation was made necessary by the fact that his parents were themselves self-creations: two Palestinians with dramatically different backgrounds and temperaments living in colonial Cairo and members of a Christian minority within a large pond of minorities, with only each other for support . . . Could ‘Edward’s’ position ever be anything but out of place?” (19). In Manuel Valls’s novel, Ahmed also feels placeless. By loving him, Claudia threatens her place as well.
10. For more on homosexuality in the Maghreb, see Jarrod Hayes, *Queer Nations: Marginal Sexualities in the Maghreb*.
11. *Zamel* is a vernacular Arabic term. It is a pejorative reference to a male homosexual, usually the one in the “submissive” position.
12. The slippages and fractures of sexual identity for those who are neither fully homosexual nor heterosexual, but rather a “third,” are highlighted by Marjorie Garber in *Bisexuality & the Eroticism of Everyday Life* (2000). She proposes, “What if, in an attempt to understand this version of the ‘third,’ we were to turn not to a two-dimensional model (the scale, the grid) . . . what I propose is a model closer to the so-called Möbius strip . . . It thus

has only one side, not two, and if split down the middle, remains in one piece . . . we have not a 'third' but one space that incorporates the concepts of 'two,' 'one,' and 'three' . . . That is closer to a diagram of bisexuality—that is to say, *sexuality*" (30). While viewing his sexuality as pliable might allow Azel to "remain in one piece," he is unable to do so because he links receiving pleasure with power and virility and therefore with his configuration of manhood. In his mind, he has traded his manhood for entry to Europe, and he has difficulty reconciling that feeling with a sexual identity he can affiliate with.

13. Edward Said asserts in his classic work *Orientalism* (1978) that the Orient has long been feminized, "otherized," and, moreover, *made so*: "The Orient was Orientalized not only because it was discovered to be 'Oriental' in all those ways considered commonplace by an average nineteenth century European, but also because *it could be*—that is, submitted to being—*made* Oriental. There is very little consent to be found, for example, in the fact that Flaubert's encounter with an Egyptian courtesan produced a widely influential model of the Oriental woman; she never spoke of herself, she never represented her emotions, presence, or history. *He* spoke for and represented her" (6).
14. For more on colonial "scripts" and the colonial dialectic, see Derek Walcott's play *Pantomime* (1978), based on race relations and power dynamics in the Caribbean. *Pantomime* centers upon a retired white actor and his black servant. As they set upon performing what will presumably be a pantomime version of the classic castaway tale of Robinson Crusoe, the "servant" appropriates the discourse and the roles become reversed. The comedic and disorienting banter between the characters is a metaphorical exploration of the layered racial rapport in postcolonial societies.
15. While the movie has been popular at film festivals, it has not generated a substantial body of reviews and criticism. Most readily available commentary has appeared in French mainstream arts and entertainment press and expresses some degree of discomfort with the representation of rural Moroccan society. As Jacques Mandelbaum states in his December 27, 2005, review of the film in the French daily *Le Monde*, "Zeinab, l'épouse, recourt . . . à une étrange tradition, qui consiste à 'endormir' l'enfant dont elle est enceinte pour hâter le retour de son mari . . . Cet arrêt artificiel des fonctions physiologiques liées à son statut de femme est une claire métaphore de la double aliénation subie par les femmes maghrébines, victimes, d'une part, de la misère qui détruit leur foyer et, d'autre part, de la sujétion où les hommes absents continuent néanmoins de les réduire." (Zeinab, the wife, *turns to a strange tradition*, which consists of "sleeping" the baby she is expecting as she awaits her husband's return . . . This artificial stoppage of the physiological functions linked to her womanhood is a clear metaphor for the double alienation endured by Maghrebi women, victims on the one hand of the misery destroying their

homes and on the other, of the subjection by which the absent men nevertheless continue to degrade them.) While much critical attention is paid to what happens *to* the women, little is said about how they *react* to it.

16. For more on women's speech and agency, please see Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's article "Can the Subaltern Speak?" Here, Spivak questions whether the subaltern/Other is able to speak as sovereign or whether they are continually spoken for and represented. The last lines of Spivak's classic article are, "The subaltern cannot speak. There is no virtue in global laundry lists with 'woman' as a pious item. Representation has not withered away. The female intellectual as intellectual has a circumscribed task which she must not disown with a flourish" (308). The illiterate characters of Halima and Zeinab challenge this assertion, for they *do* "speak," for themselves but pay a high price for having done so. Halima is beaten, exiled, and leaves behind a child for refusing the status quo. Zeinab does not actually vocalize her feelings, but she later makes her support of Halima and rejection of her husband's demands abundantly clear through her defiant actions. Despite the great personal cost, rural women like Halima and Zeinab do "speak"; the question is whether or not they are *heard*.
17. In their gestures of friendship and solidarity toward each other in a space devoid of men, Halima and Zeinab bypass their husbands and define each other as next of kin. For more on how notions of kinship are being revised beyond bloodlines in an age of mass migrations, see Janet Carsten, *After Kinship* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2004).

Chapter 3

1. Conquergood is referencing Michel De Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*.
2. In musicology, a *soundscape* is the combination of sounds that compose an immersive environment. The soundscape includes both natural and man-made sound, and it is the focus of the acoustic ecology field of study. The term "soundscape" was primarily developed by Canadian composer R. Murray Schafer in his book *The Tuning of the World* (1977).
3. Wolof is the native language of the Wolof people and is spoken in Senegal, Gambia, and Mauritania.
4. Manu Chao sings in a number of languages, including Spanish, French, Gallego (Galician), Portuguese, Arabic, Wolof, and English. His music boasts a wide array of influences, such as rock, punk, Algerian *rai*, Latin American indigenous music, French *chanson*, Caribbean salsa, and reggae. He is explicitly political and left-leaning, often advocating for the rights of immigrants and other marginalized groups in his lyrics.

5. Bhangra is a dynamic and ancient form of music and dance originating in Punjab, a region straddling the border between India and Pakistan. It was originally a celebration of the harvest, but its infectious beats have been popularized by Indian and Pakistani diasporic communities and are now heard widely in the United Kingdom and the United States. Bhangra often appears on the soundtrack of Bollywood movies and is frequently blended with hip-hop and pop music.
6. Miquel Martí I Pol (1929–2003) is widely considered the most popular and widely read poet, prose writer, and translator in the Catalan language. He started work as a young man in a textile factory but eventually had to retire due to multiple sclerosis. His illness informed his writing, through which he found a freedom and peace that transcended his physical condition. Among his most popular works are *Vint-i-set poemes en tres temps* (1972), *Paraules al vent* (1954), and *La fàbrica* (1972).
7. The Diada de Sant Jordi honors Sant Jordi (Saint George), the patron saint of Catalonia. The day is similar to Valentine's Day but has a twist in that literature and books are also celebrated. This is due to the fact that both William Shakespeare and Miguel de Cervantes died on April 23, 1616.
8. According to the Academy of American Poets, "The *ghazal* is composed of a minimum of five couplets—and typically no more than fifteen—that are structurally, thematically, and emotionally autonomous . . . Traditionally invoking melancholy, love, longing, and metaphysical questions, ghazals are often sung by Iranian, Indian, and Pakistani musicians. The form has roots in seventh-century Arabia, and gained prominence in the thirteenth- and fourteenth-century thanks to such Persian poets as Rumi and Hafiz. In the eighteenth-century, the *ghazal* was used by poets writing in Urdu, a mix of the medieval languages of Northern India, including Persian . . . Other languages that adopted the *ghazal* include Hindi, Pashto, Turkish, and Hebrew. The German poet and philosopher Goethe experimented with the form, as did the Spanish poet Federico Garcia Lorca." The site may be accessed via <http://www.poets.org>.
9. The musical composition for "Raval plural" was created by Carles Cases.
10. The lack of opportunity and acceptance among immigrant youth, even those with French citizenship, is an underlying cause of the infamous 2005 suburban riots in France. While the incident began as a protest against the deaths of two young Maghrebi boys at the hands of police, it quickly became an indictment of longstanding racial tensions in France. The unrest, which lasted over two weeks and was widely covered by international news outlets, shook the foundations of France's assimilationist ideal and drew attention to simmering anger just outside of the cities. As Smaïn Laacher notes in *Idées Reçues: L'immigration*, "Le taux de chômage, dans la population immigrée, reste deux fois plus élevé (16,4%) . . . Il touche plus particulièrement les personnes issues du Maghreb, d'Afrique

noire et de Turquie. Il en va de même pour le chômage de longue durée: 40% contre 33% pour les non-immigrés. La pauvreté frappe plus sévèrement les populations étrangères: 15% des ménages immigrés vivaient en 2001 en dessous du seuil de pauvreté (602 euros pour une personne seule) contre 6,2% du moyen nationale" (92). (The unemployment rate among the immigrant population remains twice as high (16.4%) . . . It particularly affects people from the Maghreb, black Africa, and Turkey. It is the same for long-term unemployment: 40% versus 33% for non-immigrants. Poverty hits immigrant communities most severely: in 2001, 15% of immigrant domestic workers lived under the poverty line (602 euros for a single person) versus the 6.2% national average.)

11. For more on Abd Al-Malik's religious and social beliefs, please see his autobiography *Qu'Allah bénisse la France* (*May Allah Bless France*) published by Albin Michel in 2004. It is available in English under the title *Sufi Rapper*.
12. Slam poetry is an interactive, politicized type of poetry that uses colloquial language, often tackles racial, gender, or social justice issues and is performed in front of a live audience. It may be practiced individually or as part of a team in competitions called "poetry slams." It became highly popularized in the United States during the 1990s and is part of an oral tradition that includes the Negritude movement of the Caribbean or the spoken word of the Beat generation. It has become a staple at "slam" venues such as New York City's Nuyorican Poet's Café, founded in the 1970s. For more on slam poetry, please see Miguel Algarín and Bob Holman, eds., *Aloud: Voices from the Nuyorican Poets Café*.
13. Theo van Gogh, the great-grandson of painter Vincent van Gogh's brother Theo, was murdered over having directed *Submission*, a short film made in conjunction with the controversial Somali-born writer Ayaan Hirsi Ali, who renounced Islam. The film criticizes the treatment of women in Islam through storytelling and striking visual tactics, including the use of sheer abayas and images of Quranic verses projected onto female bodies. The film was shown on the Dutch Public Broadcasting Network VPRO on August 29, 2004.
14. Gaullists consider themselves followers of the politics of Charles de Gaulle. While the party affiliates generally eschew the Left/Right categorizations, most Gaullists are now considered to be politically Right of center.
15. For more on Derrida's development of *l'écriture* and deconstruction, please see Jacques Derrida, *De la grammatologie*.
16. The French *chanson* (literally "song") is a musical style that, in its present form, can be roughly traced back to the late 1800s. It tends to tell a story, especially with regards to urban or class difficulties. In present-day French musical culture, *chanson* frequently refers to the work of more popular singers like Jacques Brel, Edith Piaf, or Charles Aznavour. Chanson is distinct from the rest of typical French "pop" music in that it follows

the rhythm of the French language, rather than that of English, and is therefore identifiable as specifically *French*. (Please note: the contemporary chanson is different from the *chanson de geste*, which is an epic poetic form in medieval Old French.)

17. The French public has largely recognized Abd Al-Malik's work. He has won three *Victoires de la Musique* awards (the French equivalent of the Grammy Awards) and in 2008 was named a *Chevalier des Arts et Lettres*, a prestigious honor given by the Ministry of French culture for contributions to French arts and literature.
18. Notably, the war in Iraq (2003–2011) saw the invocation of Reconquista/ Crusader imagery. Aside from George W. Bush's infamous comment about a "crusade" against "evildoers" in the immediate wake of the 9/11 attacks, it must be noted that José María Aznar (prime minister of Spain between 1996 and 2004) sent Spanish troops into Iraq wearing the Cross of Santiago de Matamoros (Saint John the Moor Slayer), an icon of the Reconquista. The utilization of such a symbol during a military incursion into an Arab country clearly seeks to equate modern-day Iraqis to the Moors of the fifteenth century. The incident is discussed by Giles Tremlett in "Troops Bear 'Moor-Killer' Badges," *The Guardian*, 24 July 2003, accessed 18 Jan. 2012, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2003/jul/25/spain.gilestremlett1>.
19. As Aminah Beverly McCloud eloquently surmises, the Palestinian situation is unique and is a sensitive topic to Arabs across nationalities: "Though all Arab societies feel aggrieved by the 1948 establishment of the state of Israel, the greatest burden fell on the three-quarters of a million Palestinians who were immediately uprooted and dispersed into refugee camps or into a diaspora. Jordan, Lebanon, Egypt, and Syria have now become home to at least two generations of Palestinians. The enormity of the refugee crisis required the formation of the UNRWA (United Nations Relief and Works Agency) to provide food, clothing, and assist with education. All countries that took in Palestinian refugees, with the exception of Jordan, placed various restrictions on their freedom, causing animosity and the loss of hope of real settlement" (86).
20. All lyrics are available in both English and Arabic on DAM's official website, <http://www.damrap.com>, accessed 18 Jan. 2012.
21. For further analysis on how Don Quixote's fantasy-rich and conflicted inner world influenced the modern novel, see Carroll B. Johnson, *Don Quixote: The Quest for Modern Fiction*. For more on how Don Quixote's quest for truth and how his (in)convenient madness continually challenge supposedly fixed markers of national identity, consult Barbara Fuchs's important work *Passing for Spain: Cervantes and the Fictions of Identity*.
22. This concept is gaining ground. In his book *We Are All Moors* (2009), Anouar Majid uses the "Moor" as a metaphor for the archetype of the "Other," assessing how the cultural legacy of conflict between Christians

and Moors in Europe was later reapplied against other “minority,” immigrant, or otherwise “inferior” communities, as deemed by a “Western” majority.

Conclusion

1. Please see Fernando Ortiz, *Cuban Counterpoint: Tobacco and Sugar*, trans. Harriet de Onís.
2. While the scope of Mediterranean Studies can vary widely to include the breadth of countries from Spain across to Syria and Turkey, it has often privileged the European countries believed to have given rise to “classical” Western culture.
3. Please note the Jasmine Revolution (which began the wave of mobilizations now known as the Arab Spring) in Tunisia leading up to the resignation of Zine el Abidine Ben Ali in January 2011. This was followed by mass protests leading to the fall of Egyptian president Hosni Mubarak after thirty years of rule on February 11, 2011, a bloody uprising in Libya against the 41-year dictatorship of Muammar Gaddafi culminating in Gaddafi’s death at the hands of revolutionaries on October 20, 2011, Bashar Al-Assad’s extreme crackdown on ongoing Syrian demonstrations leading many to predict an oncoming armed conflict, significant protests in Yemen and Bahrain, as well as demonstrations in Oman, Jordan, Algeria, and elsewhere.

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